

Forces for Good? British Military Masculinities on Peace Support Operations

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Abstract

This thesis is situated at the intersection of Feminist International Relations, Critical Security Studies and Gender Studies. It takes as its starting point – and offers a challenge to – the feminist contention that soldiers cannot be peacekeepers due to hegemonic constructions of military masculinity associated with the skills and practices of combat. It problematises this assumption by investigating whether involvement in the practices of conflict resolution on Peace Support Operations (PSOs) influences the construction of military masculinities. The thesis also questions the rather monolithic accounts of masculinity which are found in feminist arguments that peacekeeping soldiers reinforce neo-imperial oppression, and argues that such critiques neglect the potentially more progressive aspects of employing soldiers as peacekeepers.

Using the British Army as a case study to explore these conceptual issues, the thesis utilises a novel methodological approach derived from R W Connell's framework of gender relations and social constructivist discourse theory. It analyses both official and unofficial sources of British Army discourse on PSOs, including military doctrine, recruitment material and autobiography, and finds evidence to suggest that 'peacekeeper masculinity' offers a challenge, albeit incomplete, to the hegemonic masculinity associated with combat. The thesis argues that, despite the limited nature of this challenge, peacekeeper masculinity represents an important development because the privileging of conflict resolution practices it embodies involves disruptions to traditional gendered dichotomies and the construction of 'regendered soldiers,' with important implications for both international peace and security and gender relations.

Finding conflict resolution practices such as negotiating and building consent, moderating the use of force and humanitarian activities *manly* rather than *emasculating* is crucial if soldiers are to take PSOs as seriously as they do war. Moreover, associating masculinity with practices that require building relations of sensitivity, mutual respect and empathy has implications beyond the success of PSOs. Such associations not only challenge current models of hegemonic masculinity in the military, but – through replacing relations of dominance with more democratic relations – challenge the entire hierarchical structure of

gender relations in western culture and language. As such, in exploring the concept of regendered soldiers, this thesis contributes significantly to theories of change in gender relations as well as to feminist International Relations scholarship on military masculinities, peacekeeping and security.

Declaration

I hereby declare that, except where otherwise indicated, that this thesis is entirely my own work, and that no part of it has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

Part 1: Theoretical and Methodological Background

Chapter One: Introduction

“Peacekeeping is too important to be undertaken by soldiers; but soldiers are the only ones who can do it.”

Dag Hammarskjöld, UN Secretary General, 1953-1961

The comments of the former UN Secretary General, above, which have been echoed by many in the ensuing decades, point to a dilemma that has still not been resolved. Soldiers are trained in the art of violence and the protection of nation and territory; yet as peacekeepers, they are expected to be altruistic, neutral and capable of conflict resolution (Whitworth 2004: 3). As Betts Fetherston puts it: “There is no switch inside a Blue Helmet that automatically turns a soldier trained for warfighting into an individual prepared to work non-violently and with cultural sensitivity in a highly militarised environment” (1998: 159).

Anti-militarist feminists are among the most sceptical about the merit of using soldiers to create peace. By placing gender at the centre of their analyses of war and militarism, anti-militarist feminists draw attention to aspects of war and militarism that are neglected by other scholars. Their ultimate aim is to replace war with practices of non-violence and reconciliation (Cockburn 2003; Cohn and Ruddick 2002). Anti-militarist feminists have devoted considerable energy to highlighting the mutually reinforcing connections between masculinity and militarism whereupon “it is not only men that make war, it is wars that make men (Ehrenreich 1987: xvi), and, more recently, to how these connections impact upon humanitarian and peace support operations (PSOs). Many have argued that, due to particular constructions of masculinity in the military, soldiers are unsuited for PSOs. They point to evidence of sexual exploitation and unchecked aggression carried out by soldiers on civilians on PSOs to argue that soldiers’ unquestioned “need” for sex and the aggression, racism and misogyny encouraged in military training and culture makes them inappropriate choices to intervene into areas of conflict in order to bring about peace and security. They also suggest that PSOs do not do enough to address the social, economic and political dynamics – including gender inequalities and exploitation – which underlie and exacerbate contemporary

conflicts, and are therefore unlikely to bring about a form of peace which includes gender equality (Enloe 1993; 2000; Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, and Parpart 2005; Whitworth 2004).

This thesis is situated within this anti-militarist feminist perspective, insofar as it also seeks to demonstrate that a focus on gender and masculinities is crucial to understanding war, militarism and militaries, and is also ultimately concerned with finding alternatives to war and militarism. It is also influenced, however, by arguments which suggest a more positive role for PSOs and soldiers than that indicated in the anti-militarist feminist critiques. Proponents of new or “cosmopolitan” peacekeeping, whilst critical of previous specific operations, maintain that PSOs could be important tools in tackling contemporary conflicts. They argue that these new operations would require a different kind of soldiering: “soldiers who represent, in person, the new citizens of the emerging global community” (Kaldor 2000; also see Bellamy and Williams 2004; Elliot and Cheeseman 2005b; Woodhouse and Ramsbotham 2005). That PSOs might be capable of overcoming past failings to address issues of human security thus raises the question of whether there is a more positive story to tell about soldiers involved on PSOs.

That it might be worthwhile exploring military masculinities on PSOs in more depth is also suggested by the growing literature on masculinities. The flourishing of studies pointing to the complexity, multiplicity and dynamic nature of masculinities indicate that it is too simplistic to assume that soldiers can never be used in service of peace. This literature draws attention to the agency of men, and of the importance of men’s bodies, to argue that masculinities are actively negotiated in relation to both social structures and physical embodiment in on-going and complex processes (Brod and Kaufman 1994; Connell 1987; 1995; 2002a; Hooper 2000). Charlotte Hooper argues that most feminist scholarship on masculinities in IR focuses on how masculinities shape both the theory and practice of international relations, whilst neglecting the role international relations plays in the shaping and defining of masculinities. She writes:

Might causality, or at least the interplay of complex influences, run in both directions, in mutually reinforcing patterns? Might international relations discipline men as much as men shape international relations? (Hooper 2000: 2).

In other words, although much of the anti-militarist feminist literature is sceptical about the potential for soldiers to bring about peace, is there a more positive story? Given that the experiences and actions of a soldiers' life influence his construction of masculinity, is it possible that participation in PSOs encourages the enactment of alternative masculinities, ones more conducive to bringing about an end to conflict? As well as being a site where many of the problematic consequences of particular constructions of military masculinity are played out, could PSOs also be a site for the construction of alternatives? Much anti-militarist feminist literature has a tendency to acknowledge and discuss the multiplicity and complexity of masculinities in theoretical introductions, but to lose sight of it in empirical applications. This thesis attempts to remain alert to that complexity and dynamism through a consideration of these questions in the context of the British Army.

The British Army as a Force for Good

The British Army makes for a particularly interesting site to explore these questions because it styles itself as a "Force for Good," aiming to contribute to peace and security around the world (Ministry of Defence 1998; 2003). It has been increasingly involved in PSOs since the end of the Cold War, partly as a result of the changing global environment – with little likelihood of a Third World War or other conventional inter-state war, most western militaries have become more involved in intervening in complex political emergencies around the world – and partly as a deliberate shift to an "Ethical Foreign Policy" with the election of a New Labour government in 1997 (see Cook 1997; Dorman 2002). Even in the post 9/11 era, with the focus having shifted towards the War on Terror, the UK government has continued to position its military as a "force for good," emphasising the humanitarian objectives of its operations in Afghanistan and Iraq in all its official statements. This is not to suggest that the British Army always *is* an effective force for good, or that the military interventions into Iraq and Afghanistan constitute appropriate policies for creating peace and security. Rather, the argument is that the *official aim* of the British government and military is to contribute to international peace and security, and that this makes the British case an interesting one to explore whether the operational context has a positive influence on the construction of military masculinities.

A further reason to focus on the British case is the fact that there are fewer feminist accounts of the British Army than other western nations, and none to date that focus exclusively on PSOs. Feminist scholarship relating to soldiers on PSOs is either focused at a general or

United Nations (UN) level or on other national militaries, especially the United States (US) and Canada (see for example Enloe 1993; 2000; Higate 2004; Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, and Parpart 2005; Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004). The UK has a different history and culture from both these nations, its colonial past giving it a self-proclaimed particular expertise at PSOs and the “hearts and minds” approach, in distinction to the US (Cassidy 2004), but its warfighting history simultaneously distinguishing it from nations which have always specialised in peacekeeping, such as Canada (see Whitworth 2004). Exploring the British Army on PSOs also calls into play different questions than focusing on UN operations in general, as the major contributing countries to UN operations are usually from the global south, and do not therefore have this particular colonial history. As such, the British Army is a unique case where there is a significant gap in our knowledge.

The thesis focuses on the Army, and in particular, soldiers (including officers) with combat roles, because it is particularly interested in the way in which soldiers on the ground react to and are influenced by the demands of PSOs. Military men in the Air Force, Navy, and more specialist roles in the Army, are unlikely to find themselves involved in conflict resolution activities to the same extent as soldiers. Moreover, the military masculinities which are highlighted as problematic by anti-militarist feminists are particularly associated with combat soldiers. It is if these military masculinities are undergoing any transformation that the implications will be most significant for anti-militarist feminists.

In order to explore these questions about the construction of military masculinities, this thesis analyses a variety of sources of British Army discourse on PSOs – both official documentation, including military policy, doctrine, recruitment and training material, and the unofficial reflections of soldiers, recorded in autobiographies, comments to the press and in conversation on fieldtrips to military training. These sources provide a rich source of data about the construction of military masculinity in relation to the day-to-day practices, motivations and rewards of PSOs. By employing a discursive approach to questions of identity construction, this thesis also contributes to theoretical and methodological debates about what questions are relevant and how research can be both understood and carried out in the field of IR.

The Importance of Exploring Military Masculinities

The question of whether military masculinities can change is important for several reasons. Gender is not just a matter of individual identity, but a powerful way of structuring society: our whole system of communication and meaning is gendered. In western culture and language, adjectives associated with masculinity (e.g. strong, rational, prudent, active, objective) and femininity (e.g. weak, irrational, impulsive, passive, subjective) constitute dichotomous pairs of characteristics which are seen as mutually exclusive, and crucially, the "masculine" side of the pair is valued more highly than the "feminine" one (see for example Cohn and Ruddick 2002; Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003; Harding 1987; Hooper 2000). This is not to argue that all men and women display or enact these respective characteristics, or that they are inherent or natural to men or women; rather, in society, we attribute these values to masculinity and femininity and then use these oppositional pairs to structure our social world. Consequently, a gendered analysis needs to pay attention to the way in which gender is not just a characteristic of individuals, but a broader symbolic system – “a central organizing discourse in our culture, a set of ways of thinking, images, categories and beliefs which not only shape how we experience, understand and represent ourselves as men and women, but which also provide a familiar set of metaphors, dichotomies and values which structure ways of thinking about other aspects of the world, including war and security” (Cohn and Ruddick 2002).

As a question of identity, military masculinities matter because of the association, highlighted by anti-militarist feminists, between particular “hegemonic” forms of military masculinity and the sexual exploitation and unchecked violence against civilians on PSOs (see for example Allred 2006; Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, and Parpart 2005; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002). Feminists tend to be sceptical about the usual defence given by militaries in these cases, that they were the work of a “few bad apples,” and point to the connections between the dehumanising and feminising of the Other found in military training and the cases of abuse, arguing that the problem requires institutional rather than individual explanations (Bourke 2005; Cockburn and Zarkov 2002b; Enloe 1993; Goldstein 2001; Whitworth 2004). Hegemonic masculinity, the dominant model in a context of multiple and dynamic masculinities, operates as a cultural ideal, influencing how all men negotiate their masculinity (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell 1987; 1995; 2002a). As the hegemonic masculinity in most western militaries is associated with a combination of toughness, violence, aggression, endurance, bravery, physical fitness, hard-drinking,

heterosexuality, and the suppression of certain emotions such as fear and grief, the problems of violence and sexual exploitation on PSOs require an solution that deals with the question of masculinities. The implication for this research is that not only do we have to pay attention to whether alternative masculinities are being constructed, but crucially, whether they challenge the hegemonic model.

In terms of gender as a symbolic structure, the implications of changing military masculinities are perhaps even more important. Regardless of what men and women have actually done in wars, they have been associated with powerful archetypes: the Just Warrior, bravely going off to fight to protect his loved one, the Beautiful Soul, who stays at home, weeping and waiting but grateful of his protection (Elshtain 1982; 1987). These archetypes are reinforced by a series of hierarchical gendered dichotomies which have long underpinned and justified militarism and war: war/peace, tough/weak, protector/protected, active/passive, brave/cowardly, hard/soft, and so on. These gendered dichotomies have made it difficult for women to be taken seriously in the public realm, particularly in international relations, due to their association with weakness and passivity (Elshtain 1987; Enloe 1993). They have also served to make it difficult to challenge militarism and war, as non-violent security policies are consistently discredited as weak and soft (Enloe 2007; Tickner 2001). Challenging these constructions of masculinity (and femininity) is a crucial strategy for the anti-militarist goal of a more just and non-violent world. Changes in models of military masculinity, therefore, especially those that connect masculinity to the practices of PSOs, are not just about changes in individual identity, they are about challenging the entire structure of militarism and war. Moreover, as war has “historically played a large part in defining what it means to be a man in the modern era, symbolically, institutionally, and through the shaping of men’s bodies” (Hooper 2000: 81), changes to military masculinities have consequences beyond the military to other contexts where gender structures relations in oppressive ways.

The question of how to bring about change in gender relations has long troubled feminists. Some have argued for strategies of inclusion, advocating pursuing gender equality through increasing the number of women in male-dominated spaces. In this context, however, anti-militarist feminists argue that increasing the number of women in the military does not challenge the institution itself, and therefore does little to tackle militarism and war (for contributions to this debate see Enloe 1983; Lorentzen and Turpin 1998). A second feminist strategy is that of reversal, where disparaged practices and values associated with women

and the 'feminine' are re-valued, suggesting in this context a policy of increasing the number of women peacekeepers (see for example De Groot 2001; Stiehm 1995; 1999). Again, however, anti-militarist feminists have found this strategy problematic, arguing that it plays into stereotypical and essentialist views of women as naturally or inherently peaceful, reinforcing the gendered dichotomies that are so problematic in underpinning militarism and war (Enloe 2007; Whitworth 2004). As a result, many feminists argue for strategies of displacement, aiming to deconstruct the gendered dichotomies underpinning war and militarism. This approach too, however, has been criticised because of the way in which deconstruction is primarily an analytic tool rather than amounting to a political strategy (Squires 1999: 230).

In masculinities literature, the debate has taken a slightly different form, with the question tending to be one of how we challenge hegemonic masculinity. Gender theorists have pointed to the way in which masculinities have changed and become "softer" in a variety of contexts – the emergence of the "New Man" – and yet, power, wealth and respect have overwhelmingly remained in the hands of men – albeit some more than others (Connell 1995; Demetriou 2001; Ehrenreich 1983; Hooper 2000; Niva 1998). In the context of this thesis, the argument is that military masculinities associated with peacekeeping may appear to represent progress, but they do little to challenge underlying gender inequalities. Some feminists, for example, suggest that narratives of peacekeeping draw on and reinforce colonial discourses where white, male heroes from advanced, civilised lands, had to intervene into lands of chaos to save and/or admonish the primitive masses (Orford 1999; Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004). Such "neo-imperial" discourses serve to justify the interventions and uphold the current global neo-liberal system, to the benefit of the west. Gender plays a crucial role in such narratives, just as it did in colonial times, as the peacekeepers are constructed as masculine, heroic, civilised, advanced, white protectors and those in the areas of conflict are feminised as weak, child-like victims, or as barbaric, excessively violent hordes. Hegemonic masculinity may shift from the Just Warrior to the Just Peacekeeper, but gendered relations of inequality and injustice remain. Indeed, given that hegemonic masculinity is *defined* as a fluid cultural ideal, shifting and adapting in order to resemble the traits necessary for the retention of power, the question of how can it ever be challenged is a particularly thorny theoretical as well as practical predicament.

This thesis brings these two literatures together, and thus makes a significant contribution to thinking about how to achieve real and lasting change in gender relations. It argues that it is possible to identify an alternative military masculinity in the British Army, associated with the practices of PSOs and conflict resolution. It is not a model which succeeds in challenging the dominance of the hegemonic model, associated with the practices of combat, but it is one which is nonetheless significant for its lessons about what is necessary for change. The thesis argues that this “peacekeeper masculinity” is important because of the way it challenges the traditional gendered dichotomies which underpin militarism and war. It further argues, however, in light of the criticisms highlighted above, that it is only when it is constructed through relations of equality, empathy and mutual respect, rather than through subordinated feminised and racialised Others, that it is truly progressive. When constructed in such ways, it brings about the important anti-militarist feminist vision of a “regendered military” (Cockburn and Hubic 2002), a concept I develop in order to demonstrate that what is required for real and lasting change in gender relations is modified versions of deconstruction, reversal *and* inclusion.

Structure of Text

The thesis is organised into three parts: the following three chapters deal with theoretical and methodological issues relevant to the research; the subsequent three provide the empirical data of the case study – the exploration of British Army masculinities on PSOs; and the final three discuss the implications of peacekeeper masculinity for theories of change in gender relations.

The next chapter, *Gender, International Relations, War and Peace* explores the anti-militarist feminist position that masculinities and militaries exist in a mutually reinforcing dynamic. It examines what anti-militarist feminists have had to say about peacekeeping, highlighting the problems of sexual exploitation, unchecked violence and Othering, which make the attempt to use soldiers to create peace so problematic. It also discusses the suggestions of some theorists that there is a more positive story to be told. It thus sets the scene and provides an elaboration of the rationale for the thesis. Finally, it takes a brief look at the mainstream academic theories of International Relations (IR) in order to demonstrate how they neglect gender and identity politics, and cannot therefore engage with the questions of this thesis and effectively challenge war, militarism, gender inequality and injustice. It

suggests that alternative academic approaches, such as Critical Security Studies, offer more potential for feminist engagement, a position further developed in chapter four.

The third chapter, *British Military Masculinities: Physically Fit; Mentally Brave; Emotionally Hard*, examines the anti-militarist feminist arguments about military masculinities in the particular context of the British military. Using Connell's framework for analysing gender (Connell 2002a), it highlights the multiplicity and contradiction inherent in masculinities which complicate the notion that soldiers can never be used in the service of peace. It argues that, nonetheless, particular constructions of masculinity have dominated in the British Army, those that are "physically fit, mentally brave, emotionally hard" (Woodward 1998: 287). It is this focus on "hegemonic masculinity" which enables us to combine the multiplicity and contradiction inherent in military masculinities with the insights of anti-militarist feminists into the problematic nature of using those trained for combat to bring about peace. This chapter develops the argument that in order for British soldiers to be effective on PSOs, not only must alternative masculinities be constructed but they must challenge the hegemony of more traditional models.

The fourth chapter, *Exploring Military Masculinities: A Feminist Discourse Analysis*, introduces the methodology and methods of the thesis. It argues that a social constructivist approach to gender and international relations best combines attention to the fluidity of gender, which is crucial for exposing the problematic nature of hegemonic masculinity, with the possibility of change. It also demonstrates the potential compatibility between anti-militarist feminist and Critical Security Studies approaches to IR, both of which conceptualise security as socially constructed, enabling a progressive politics aimed at ending inequalities, injustices and violence. It introduces the discursive methodology, which builds on both Lene Hansen's poststructuralist discourse theory (Hansen 2006) and Charlotte Hooper's textual analysis (Hooper 2000). Both Hansen and Hooper develop methodologies which are attentive to power dynamics in constructions of gender but which also stress the importance of a theoretical perspective which is open to change. Finally, it introduces the sources of British Army discourse, and discusses the issues of validity, reliability and generalizability in relation to a discursive approach.

The fifth chapter, *The British Army as a Force for Good* details the history of the British Army's development as a "Force for Good." The aim is to demonstrate *not* that the British Army always *is* an effective builder or even facilitator of peace and security, but that this is what it claims, intends, or believes itself to be doing. This claim means that PSOs are significantly different from traditional operations, aimed at resolving conflict rather than defeating an enemy in combat. The chapter argues that although this will vary from operation to operation, soldier to soldier, and day to day, soldiers themselves are thus involved in activities of conflict resolution: building consent, negotiating, avoiding the use of force, aiding in reconstruction, and so on.

The next chapter, *Competing Discourses: Peacekeeping as Masculine, Peacekeeping as Emasculating*, goes on to discuss how British Army discourse constructs these conflict resolution practices. It argues that within the "master discourse" of PSOs, there are actually two competing discourses: one which links these practices to masculinity through a variety of strategies of masculinisation, and thereby constructs a model of peacekeeper masculinity, and one which links them to femininity, thereby reasserting the power of the traditional hegemonic masculinity associated with combat. It explores the tensions between the discourses and concludes that the model of peacekeeper masculinity is perhaps best interpreted as a significant but as yet unsuccessful challenge to the hegemon.

Chapter seven, *Peacekeeper Masculinity and the Other*, explores the relations between British peacekeepers and others in the PSO environment, both women and other men. Recognising that masculinities are constructed through interactions, it explores how British soldiers construct their masculinities in relation to others, and whether these interactions reinforce or challenge some of the traditional gendered dichotomies underpinning militarism and war.

The eighth chapter, *Implications of Peacekeeper Masculinity – the Regendered Soldier?*, as the name suggests, discusses the implications of this discourse – both in terms of what it might mean for achieving peace and security, and in terms of what it tells us about changing gender identities and relations. It discusses the arguments that narratives of benign peacekeepers lend support to neo-imperial projects of intervention, arguments which are backed up by much of the evidence of Othering detailed in chapter seven. It argues that,

ultimately, however, these accounts rely on too monolithic a view of masculinity, and therefore neglect the potentially more progressive aspects of peacekeeper masculinity. This argument is developed in the context of the concept of “regendered militaries” (Cockburn and Hubic 2002) which has the potential, through its combination of modified versions of the feminist strategies of inclusion, reversal and deconstruction, to address the problems of PSOs and peacekeeper masculinity.

Chapter nine, *Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity – Engendering Change*, relates this discussion to the literature on challenging hegemonic masculinity. By discussing the case of peacekeeper masculinity in terms of theoretical debates about hegemonic masculinity, it clarifies the question of how progressive change is possible in gender relations in other contexts. This chapter can thus be seen as contributing to the development of gender theory. The final chapter, *Conclusion - Regendered Militaries and (Gender) Justice, Peace and Security*, summarises the key findings of this thesis, outlines areas for future research, and expands on why changes in military masculinities matter so much for issues of security, justice, equality and peace.

Chapter Two: Gender, International Relations, War and Peace

War is an activity and an event of such cataclysmic, existential significance that it has always been “above” questions of gender identity. Can gender be relevant when life and death are in the balance? YES. Gender analysis reveals that the prosecution of mass, legitimized, psychotic violence depends on a particular way of constructing and maintaining gender identities. After all, what could be more profoundly gendered than a space said to contain nothing but men, than an activity described as performed by men only? (Cooke 1993: 177).

The soldier hero has proved to be one of the most durable and powerful forms of idealized masculinity within Western cultural traditions since the time of the ancient Greeks. Military virtues such as aggression, strength, courage and endurance have repeatedly been defined as the natural and inherent qualities of manhood, whose apogee is attainable only in battle. Celebrated as a hero in adventure stories telling of his dangerous and daring exploits, the soldier has become a quintessential figure of masculinity (Dawson 1994: 1).

Anti-militarist feminist theorising has exploded the myth that gender is irrelevant to the study of international relations (IR),¹ and in particular, issues of security, war and peace. Highlighting that war making is an activity primarily engaged in by men, and governed by norms of masculinity, anti-militarist feminists argue that gender must be placed at the centre of our analysis if we are to understand and – crucially – challenge the practices of militarism and war. The aim of this chapter is to explore this position, so as to set the scene and provide a rationale for this thesis, which concerns what happens to the masculinity of British soldiers when they are involved in Peace Support Operations (PSOs).

The first section of the chapter considers the role of masculinity in war and militarism, and argues that ideas about soldiering are intimately connected to ideas about what it is to be a man, resulting in a mutually reinforcing dynamic between war, soldiering and combat and the construction of masculinities. This dynamic, it is argued, is one of the reasons that war,

¹ In line with other writers, I use International Relations (in the upper case) to refer to the academic discipline and theories, and international relations (lower case) to refer to the practice.

militarism and violent conflict have proved so hard to eradicate. The second section of the chapter focuses on one of the ways in which the international community currently attempts to deal with conflict – International Peacekeeping – and outlines some of the concerns that anti-militarist feminists have raised about using soldiers in the service of peace, concerns linked specifically to masculinity. The third section turns to focus on the academic discipline of IR in order to demonstrate that most major theories of IR neglect gender in their analyses, thus preventing them from being able to tackle the gendered structures of militarism and war. It argues that only those critical approaches to IR which are able to bring gender into view can provide a conceptual basis for challenging militarism and war.

I: Masculinity, War and Militarism

The Manliness of War

Masculinity is intimately connected to war, soldiering and combat. It is men who, overwhelmingly, have been the fighting personnel of not only national militaries, but police forces, popular militias and armed gangs; who have designed, created and traded in weaponry; and who have made the decisions to go to war. Men may take part in violence for many reasons – for money, for honour, patriotism or brotherhood, in self defence, for liberation, or to liberate others, to name but a few (Cockburn 2001); whatever the reasons, the predominance of men across the spectrum of violence indicates that there is something about masculinity *per se* that is worth investigating (Connell 2002b). In many cultures, proving yourself on the battlefield has been an important way of proving yourself a man:

The notion of combat plays a central role in the construction of notions of manhood and justifications for the superiority of maleness in the social order. In reality, of course, to be a soldier of the state means to be subservient, obedient and almost totally dependent. But that mundane reality is hidden behind a potent myth: to be a soldier means possibly to experience 'combat', and only in combat lies the ultimate test of a man's masculinity (Enloe 1983: 12).

This may not be universal, but it is remarkably consistent across time and space, with militaries providing the main remnant of traditional manhood-making rituals in the western world (Goldstein 2001: 265). As the next chapter demonstrates, even today, in societies such as the UK which no longer have national service or conscription, the myth dies hard: “In

most cultures that we know about, to be manly means to be a potential warrior. Any man who claims that it is not and never will be in his nature to soldier is therefore taking a risk” (Enloe 1993: 52).

To argue this is not to claim that men are naturally violent; as mentioned in the introduction, theories that men and women are naturally or biologically different simply do not stand up to serious scientific scrutiny. Testosterone, for example, the male hormone to which men’s seeming propensity to violence is often linked, has been shown to be as likely a *consequence* of social dominance in violent and competitive situations as a *cause* (Sapolsky 1997). Although men do dominate the ranks of those who commit violent crime, there are more men who never commit such crimes than those who do (Connell 2002b). The facts that many legendary pacifists, such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King and John Lennon, are men, and that women are capable of terrible violence, indicate that popular ideas of innate violence or peacefulness are myths.

Most feminists writing about war and militarism have been sceptical about assertions of men’s *natural* violence and women’s *natural* pacifism, but have maintained that gender is relevant as a practice and, in particular, as a *system of meaning*, a “system of meaning that can be manipulated to encourage both men and women in their support for war” (Steans 2006: 49). A crucial aspect of this is the way in which ideas of masculinity are linked to ideas of toughness, bravery and heroism in order to aid the recruitment and motivation of men as soldiers. Goldstein, for instance, argues that the reality of war is fear and confusion, and men on the whole find combat horrible and unnatural; the cultural response is to develop gender roles that equate masculinity with toughness under fire (Goldstein 2001). Why else, he writes, would we need conscription and harsh discipline in training, punishment for desertion, and rewards (both material and non) for fighting? (Goldstein 2001: 253). Or, as Enloe puts it “If masculinity in the raw were sufficient, there would be little need for the sweat, blisters and humiliations of basic training” (Enloe 1993: 55). These humiliations depend heavily on gender: the likes of “woman,” “pussy,” “faggot,” and “girl” the ubiquitous insults hurled at soldiers who struggle or fail (Goldstein 2001: 265; Whitworth 2004: 228-243). This is especially so in combat units, according to Deborah Harrison, who describes basic training in Canada:

During basic training, male recruits are challenged to become "real men" by proving that they are not women. Instructors encourage stereotypically masculine behaviours from recruits by using female-associated words to derogate them... The members of especially macho units celebrate their shared maleness by objectifying women, viewing pornography films, and joking about making women the targets of their violence... (Harrison 2003: 75).

Even before joining up, young men normally have been socialized into ideas associated with soldiering, and of being a warrior, through family norms, movies, male role models, books, military recruitment campaigns, television programmes and children's games (Cooke and Woollacott 1993; Segal, Segal, and Eyre 1992: 121; Whitworth 2004: 240). Whitworth points out how "stubbornly pervasive is the prescriptive moral tale: join a military, young man, and you will confirm your manliness, both to others and to yourself" (Whitworth 2004: 240). These observations about military culture and training lead many anti-militarist feminists to conclude, with Goldstein, that masculinity or "manhood" is an "artificial status which is typically constructed around a culture's need for brave and disciplined soldiers" (Goldstein 2001: 283).

This contention is problematised in the next chapter, as it implies that masculinity only exists in order to fill the ranks, that men have no agency in the construction of their gender identities, and that there is nothing positive about masculinity – all of which can be contested. However, it does seem clear that militaries are crucial sites for the construction of particular forms of masculinity. As Enloe argues, with remarkable cross cultural consistency, men are taught to have a stake in the military's essence – combat – as it is supposedly a validation of their own male essence, and this is matched by the military's own institutional investment in being represented as society's bastion of male identity (Enloe 1983: 15). The result is a mutually reinforcing dynamic, where particular constructions of masculinity – associated with toughness, aggression, proving oneself through adversity, courage, endurance, physical and psychological strength; rationality; obedience; discipline; patriotism; lack of squeamishness; avoidance of certain emotions such as fear, sadness, uncertainty, guilt, remorse and grief; and heterosexual competency – depend on militarism, and militarism depends on these constructions of masculinity.

The consequence, as many anti-militarist feminists have pointed out, is that western states may obtain a military ready to fight, but they also create a violent and sexist culture. Anti-

militarist feminist scholarship has thus highlighted the way in which domestic violence is higher amongst military personnel than wider society (Harrison 2003; Lutz 2004; Whitworth 2004); rape is a deliberately utilised weapon of war by nearly all national armies (Allen 1996; Hansen 2001; Seifert 1996; Skjelsbaek 2001; Stiglmayer 1994); prostitution flourishes almost everywhere soldiers are posted (Enloe 1993; 2000; Moon 1997); and sexual harassment is rife in many western armed forces (Enloe 2000; Maley 2006). That these should be the consequences of military training should not come as a surprise:

Basic military training helps to nurture the exaggerated ideals of manhood and masculinity demanded by national militaries. But this transformation is most effectively accomplished through the denigration of everything marked by difference, whether that be women, people of colour, or homosexuality. It is not by coincidence that the insults most new recruits face are gendered, raced and homophobic insults: young soldiers are learning to deny, indeed to obliterate, the 'other' within themselves (Whitworth 2004: 242-3).

The way in which military masculinities are constructed through the denigration of the Other means that actual violence against those Others is all the more likely. It also means that dichotomous thinking – where masculinity is everything that femininity is not – is reinforced. This dichotomous thinking, which structures western culture and language, has damaging implications not just for women and other subordinated groups, but for broader society including men themselves. Men do not always benefit from definitions of masculinity which involve denying or suppressing all that is held to be feminine – as Whitworth demonstrates in her discussion of soldiers suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Whitworth 2004: 166-172). The following section goes on to discuss this dichotomous thinking in the context of militarism and war and its implications in more detail.

Implications for the Other: Femininity

As anti-war feminists are keen to point out, war is not a discrete event with clear locations, and a beginning and an end. It is important to avoid separating war from either the preparations made for it, or from its long term physical, psychological, socio-economic, environmental, and gendered effects, for focusing on war alone “tempts us to underestimate the kinds and amounts of political power it takes for governments to wage wars because it

ignores the decisions taken and policies implemented in the pre-war period that lay the cultural groundwork for waging war and that make fighting another day feasible and tolerable” (Enloe 1993: 63):

The practice of war entails far more than the killing and destroying of armed combat itself. It requires the creation of a “war system,” which entails: arming, training, and organizing for possible wars; allocating the resources these preparations require; creating a culture in which wars are seen as morally legitimate, even alluring; and shaping and fostering the masculinities and femininities which undergird men’s and women’s acquiescence to war (Cohn and Ruddick 2002: 4).

As Cohn and Ruddick suggest, this “war system” has relied on constructions of the feminine Other as much as on constructions of masculinity. It has never been enough to tap the supposed intrinsic violent qualities of men to fill the ranks or the nurturing qualities of women to look after the ‘home front;’ we have needed an “elaborate gender ideology” to construct those identities (Enloe 1983: 211). Elshtain has termed these identities or “gendered archetypes” the Just Warrior and the Beautiful Soul, where the Beautiful Soul remains at home, weeping and waiting, whilst the Just Warrior fights to protect and defend his women and children.² In times of war, the Beautiful Soul can become the Civic Cheerleader, the woman who remains on the home front but champions the cause of war, or the Official Mourner, the woman who mourns her lost loved ones whilst never doubting the justness of the cause (Elshtain 1982; 1987), suggesting some variety in the femininities which exist as part of this gender ideology. This diversity is severely limited, however, by the underlying pervasiveness of the gendered protector/protected dichotomy. Ultimately, the gender ideology requires that “men are socialised from boyhood to see their masculine identities tied to protecting women while tolerating violence,” whilst “women have to be prepared from girlhood to admire men in uniforms and to see themselves as bandaging the wounds inflicted by violence rather than wielding it” (Enloe 1993: 63-64). It is the women on the home front who make the brutality and sacrifices of war seem worthwhile and this is explicitly about notions of protection: women are excluded from combat so men have something to fight for (Enloe 1983: 151; Steans 2006: 57; Stiehm 1982). Although the distinction between the home and the battle front has been increasingly arbitrary in modern

² The Beautiful Soul replaced the ancient ideal of the Spartan Mother – another gendered archetype, also still in evidence today, who found glory in sacrificing her sons to the polis.

warfare – with civilians increasingly at risk and relatively few soldiers in actual combat – the identification of the male as the warrior and protector and the female as protected have proved resilient to re-interpretation (Peniston-Bird 2000: 3). Being understood as the protected – and therefore as weak, vulnerable, precious, pacific – prevents women being taken seriously in the public realm, perhaps especially in international relations where being strong, tough and independent is particularly valued (Elshtain 1987; Enloe 2007: 40).

Women in the Military

This positioning of women as Beautiful Souls (pacific, nurturing, life-giving) and men as Just Warriors (warriors, protectors, life-takers), has persisted despite the fact that throughout history many women have taken up arms in wars and armed struggles. Even with the recent rise in the number of women in the military in many western states,³ this gender ideology has proved remarkably resilient. In the debates over women soldiers, for example, resistance among military and political elites, the media and the general public clearly draws on the idea that only men have the requisite strength, endurance, courage and willingness to endure exposure to extreme physical danger; whilst women are unsuited for the rigours of military life and are to be protected because of the family roles of child bearing and rearing (Kummel 2002: 618; Steans 2006: 49). Especially resisted is the idea that women should serve in combat roles, where it appears as if western militaries desperately search for a fundamental intrinsic difference between men and women in order to continue to justify the exclusion of women from combat (Enloe 1983: 140-9).⁴ Studies into pregnancy, menstruation, upper body strength, group dynamics, and so on, however, all fail to demonstrate that women are unsuitable for combat, suggesting that the justification has less to do with the capabilities of women, and everything to do with protecting the masculinity of war. Although relatively few men in the army have engaged in combat, it has what Enloe terms “ideological potency” (Enloe 1993: 56; Kovitz 2003; Ruddick 1989). Fundamentally, it appears, if combat can be restricted to men, then war remains masculine. Quotes from soldiers in reaction to women in the ranks reveal that the manliness of war must be protected for men's self-discipline and egos:

³ The percentages of women in selected NATO countries' Armed Forces as of 2006 is Canada 12.8%, France 13.28%, Germany 6%, The Netherlands 9%, UK 9.1% and the US 10.49%. Available at http://www.hq.nato.int/issues/women_nato/perc_fem_soldiers_2001_2006.pdf

⁴ The British case will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

[Women's participation in conflict] would be an enormous psychological distraction for the male, who wants to think that he's fighting for that woman somewhere behind... It tramples the male ego. When you get right down to it, you've got to protect the manliness of war (US Marine Corps Commandant cited in Enloe 1983: 153-4).

Ultimately, the number of women in the military, and the opening up of posts, can only make so much difference because of the way in which gender operates as a system of meaning. As Cockburn puts it: "More important than numbers in a gender analysis is uncovering the differentiation and asymmetry of masculine and feminine as governing principles, as idealised qualities, as practices, as symbols" (Cockburn 2001; also see Cohn and Ruddick 2002; Connell 1987; Steans 2006). Institutions can thus be masculine despite increasing numbers of women because of the devaluation and exclusion of that which is marked "feminine" – the soft, the weak, the emotional, the concrete, the particular, human bodies and their vulnerability (Cockburn 2001; Cohn and Ruddick 2002; Tickner 2001; Woodward and Winter 2006). Speaking of national security institutions more generally, Enloe writes:

It has been imagined that anyone wanting to be taken seriously in the field of national security – in government agencies, in think tanks, in graduate schools – has to be "rational." The opposite of rational has been imagined to be "emotional." This conventional assumption – combined with the belief that "manly" men are the most rational beings, while less manly men and virtually all women are prone to being "emotional" – has made a certain kind of masculinity the entry ticket into national security discussions. National security thinking (including taking part in often fierce debates among national security experts) has been portrayed as leaving no room for sentimentality: one has to be able to confront unpleasant facts "without blinking"; one has to be "hard nosed." Rational manly security experts must be capable of "muscular thinking"; they must never show themselves to be "soft" (Enloe 2007: 40).

In sum, anti-militarist feminists have demonstrated that ideas about masculinity and femininity are central to the creation and reproduction of militarism with crucial implications for their hopes of achieving peace. "As long as ideas about masculinity can be manipulated in order to encourage men to kill and be killed and while even women continue to accept, or fail to resist, certain constructions of femininity and womanhood, [feminists] will not be able to challenge the gender ideology upon which the military is built" (Steans 2006: 61). The

military will continue to influence what it means to be man, engendering violent and misogynist masculinities. As Steans comments, this would be hard enough to challenge, if the task was just about changing ideas and dominant discourses on war and peace, but it is made all the more difficult by the material structures that underpin the interconnected military and gender systems (Steans 2006: 61). There are powerful elites which stand to benefit from militarism and war – government officials, military leaders, arms manufacturers, corporation executives – and they are predominantly male. Challenging militarism and war thus involves both deconstructing prevailing gender ideologies *and* dismantling material structures – a task complicated by their mutually supportive interconnections. One of the ways in which the international community currently attempts to deal with war and conflict is through international peacekeeping. The next section discusses what anti-militarist feminists have had to say about peacekeeping as an attempt to bring about a more peaceful and just world.

II: Anti-militarist Feminist Perspectives on Peacekeeping

Soldiers as Peacekeepers: an Inherent Contradiction?

In 1993 Enloe argued that:

The form of military force that is inspiring perhaps the greatest hope is the United Nations peacekeeping force. It inspires optimism because it seems to perform military duties without being militaristic. And its troops at first glance appear to escape the distorting dynamics of militarism because they may not depend so heavily on patriarchal masculinity.... To date we in fact know amazingly little about what happens to a male soldier's sense of masculine license when he dons the blue helmet or armband of the United Nations peacekeeper... (Enloe 1993: 33-34).

The fact that United Nations Peacekeeping forces are multi-national suggested to Enloe that peacekeeping offers a chance to detach military service from the kind of misogynist masculinity outlined above (Enloe 1993: 259; see also Whitworth 2004: 1-2). Yet by 2000 Enloe was less optimistic, as the evidence mounted that sexual exploitation, including prostitution, rape, trafficking of women and other sexual violence, has been a feature of almost every UN peacekeeping operation (Al-Hussein 2005; Allred 2006; Crossette 2003; Higate 2004; Martina 2005; McKenna 2002; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002; Stuart 2003; United

Nations 2002; Walsh and Byrne 2002). Observing, for example, that the UN peacekeeping mission to Cambodia (UNTAC) in the early nineties resulted in a rise in the number of women working in prostitution in Cambodia from 6,000 to 25,000, Enloe cautioned that “there is nothing inherent in international peacekeeping operations as currently structured that makes their soldiers immune to the sort of sexism that has fuelled military prostitution in wartime and peacetime” (Enloe 2000: 99-101).

The authors of a UNIFEM Report into the impact of armed conflict on women stated:

Perhaps most disturbing of everything we saw and learned was the association, in the vast majority of peacekeeping environments, between the arrival of peacekeeping personnel and increased prostitution, sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS infection (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 61)

Rehn and Sirleaf found evidence of thousands of girls under 16 years old working as prostitutes, starving families selling their daughters into prostitution, and internationals demanding sexual relations with women they employed as domestic workers. They also indicate the devastating consequences of such sexual exploitation: after the operation is over, women who are sex workers or have had relationships with peacekeepers are often ostracized by their communities and left to bring up the children of such relationships alone – children who are stigmatized, rejected by family and community and who grow up in poverty. Although some peacekeepers establish more permanent intimate connections with local women, such relationships can rarely be considered purely voluntary, as they are often linked to the necessities of hunger and the need for housing or jobs (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 70-71) .

Not all the sexual exploitation in PSO environments is perpetrated by soldiers, but foreign troops are a major part of the problem, creating a demand for prostitution (Rehn and Sirleaf 2002: 71). Women’s organisations who have tried to tackle the problem of UN peacekeepers using prostitutes have repeatedly come up against an attitude where a soldier’s ‘need’ for sex is unquestioned (Cockburn and Zarkov 2002b; Higate 2003b). For example, Madeleine Rees, head of the Sarajevo office for the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at the time, wrote: “There is this whole boys-will-be-boys attitude about

men visiting brothels. There is a culture inside the UN where you can't criticise it. That goes all the way to the top" (Hipkins 2003). UNTAC head Yusushi Akashi used the same "boys will be boys" line to respond to reports of sexual exploitation in by the UN in Cambodia (Whitworth 2004: 4), and Richard Holbrooke, the US Assistant Secretary of State and chief negotiator in the Balkans, reportedly made the comment that "Human nature is human nature. Where peacekeepers go they attract prostitutes" (Mazurana 2005: 34).

Many anti-militarist feminists argue that there is a contradiction inherent in international armed peacekeeping, the idea that we can use those who are trained in combat and the protection of nation and territory to create peace (Cockburn and Zarkov 2002a: 11; Higate and Henry 2004: 484; Whitworth 2004: 3). As a peacekeeper, a soldier is supposed to be altruistic, neutral and capable of conflict resolution in any cultural setting – "a warrior-prince-of-peace" (Whitworth 2004: 3), but as the previous section demonstrated, military training and culture is predominantly about learning to be tough, to dehumanize the enemy and to be able to apply overwhelming force. This leads many commentators to speak of tension and contradiction:

[G]iven their earlier socialization into the hypermasculine military, what is required of peacekeepers in the field may be fraught with tension. For example, peacekeeping operations are argued to require impartiality, sensitivity and empathy, attributes that may have been discouraged by traditional military training; and it could even be argued that such attributes involve the very opposite of the conventional activities of warriors, such as aggression, instrumentality, and goal oriented 'brutality' (Higate and Henry 2004: 484)

Whitworth's argument that "All of the messages that a soldier receives about appropriately masculine soldierly behaviour are fundamentally at odds with what is then expected in a peace operation" (Whitworth 2004: 9), is backed up by research which suggests that soldiers are at best ambivalent about their peacekeeping role (Enloe 2000; Miller 1997; Miller and Moskos 1995; Razack 2004; Segal, Segal, and Eyre 1992; Whitworth 2004). "I didn't come in the Marine Corps for that type of thing," explained a thirty-nine-year-old pilot, Peter Coz. "Not that I have any problem with it, but it's not what makes me tick" (cited in Enloe 1993: 199). These attitudes suggest that peacekeeping is not taken seriously by many soldiers, making it unlikely that operations will be as successful as they could be.

Peacekeeping as the New Imperialism

A further concern of anti-militarist feminists about peacekeeping is the way it fails to deal with the underlying causes of conflict and thus constitutes a “sticking plaster” approach. Such arguments are part of a broader critique of peacekeeping, which point to the legacies of colonialism and the impact of neo-liberal market economics in causing and exacerbating inequalities and injustices which then lead to conflict (see for example Bellamy 2003; Duffield 2001; Pugh 2004; Rieff 2002; Thomas 2001). In this critique, the interventions of western nations into areas of conflict are intended to secure order and maintain the current global economic system, rather than being altruistic interventions aimed at resolving the conflict and its underlying causes. Feminists refine this critique by pointing to the gendered nature of the inequalities and injustices that need to be tackled for long term peace. For example, Mazurana argues that international interventions must challenge the gendered distribution of power and wealth if they are to protect individuals from present or future violence. In particular, officials who think that issues regarding women, gender, and human rights are "soft" or marginal issues that can wait after the "hard" issues have been dealt with, are failing to comprehend what has caused and sustained the conflict; they have failed to grasp that emerging political complexes exist on a foundation of inequality and exploitation (Mazurana 2005: 30-31):

Because for the most part the politics of gender are not recognized and the gendered causes and consequences of armed conflict and post conflict periods are overlooked, the few international and national policies and programs developed to empower women or promote women in peace building too often remain superficial because they do so little to challenge and dismantle the structures that caused or fuelled the violent conflict (Mazurana 2005: 40).

In order to have any long term success in building peace, anti-militarist feminists insist that more attention must be paid to the social, economic and political dynamics supporting the conflict; otherwise, peacekeepers run the risk of being incorporated into the very political and economic systems which are preventing sustainable peace and human security (Barnes 2006; Mazurana 2005; Olsson and Tryggestad 2001b; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002). Moreover, the gendered perspective required in order to get to the root causes of conflict is often missing when the military is central to an intervention (Betts Fetherston 1995; Enloe 2002: 23; Hudson 2005: 120; Mazurana 2005: 38; Stiehm 1999: 54).

Some feminists go further than pointing out the gendered nature of the root causes of conflict and the need to take into account the gendered impacts of interventions. They argue that way in which peacekeeping is described in legal, policy and media discourses draws upon and reinforces gendered dichotomies in problematic ways. In these accounts, popular narratives of peacekeeping position intervening western nations and their peacekeepers as the white, male heroes – advanced, civilized, democratic – and feminise the rest of the world as backward, chaotic and primitive (Orford 1999; Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004). As such, these narratives reveal the extent to which peacekeeping interventions are the latest form of imperialism – reinforcing and justifying the current global system by making the interventions of the white, male representatives of civilization seem altruistic and natural. Worse than a sticking plaster, then, peacekeeping interventions are said to be actively damaging: doing nothing to address the root causes of conflict, whilst reinforcing gendered messages about who is advanced, democratic and good, and who is backward, primitive and in need of help. These arguments will be discussed at length in chapter eight where, after the exploration of British Army masculinities in the context of PSOs, the implications of any shifts in masculinity construction will be discussed in more detail.

Peacekeeping and Gender Mainstreaming

Persistent campaigning from women's organisations, resulting from research into the gendered impacts of conflict including sexual exploitation, led to the passing of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security (SCR 1325) on 31 October 2000 (United Nations 2000a). SCR 1325 recognises the "important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security" (United Nations 2000a). It aims to mainstream gender into peacekeeping operations by addressing the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the neglect of women's organisations in peace building, and the lack of women in peacekeeping contingents. SCR 1325 was heralded as a breakthrough for feminist activism and as providing the framework which was crucial for tackling many of the problems outlined above (Barnes 2006: 13; Whitworth 2004: 121-124).

The aim of increasing the number of women in peacekeeping contingents is perhaps the most controversial as it potentially includes increasing the number of women soldiers and, reflecting feminist arguments about women in the military in general, there is little agreement as to whether increasing the number of women in the military tackles gender stereotypes and oppression or whether it merely legitimises the military (see for example Enloe 1983; Lorentzen and Turpin 1998). Advocates of more women peacekeepers argue that it would increase the success of peacekeeping operations for a variety of reasons: women soldiers can achieve better contact with the female half of served population; women soldiers bring in different approaches (they are often perceived as more empathetic which enhances reconstruction and political work, and as defusing tension rather than trying to control events); the legitimacy of the mission is increased (their presence demonstrates the UN principle of non-discrimination); and the presence of women soldiers leads to more appropriate sexual behaviour on part of peacekeeping men (De Groot 2001; Olsson and Tryggestad 2001b; Stiehm 1999; 2001).⁵ For these authors, the key problem is how to increase the tiny percentage of peacekeeping troops that are female in a context where the United Nations has trouble enough recruiting troops at all (Stiehm 2001).

Some of these arguments rest less on practical considerations and more on gender essentialisms and stereotypes. Arguing that men are “inherently more violent than women,” and that militaries “develop and channel this male capacity for violence,” De Groot contends that when women are violent they tend to be so in a highly controlled, disciplined and limited fashion for a specific cause (De Groot 2001: 34). As such, they are more likely to be able to control such aggression, and thus better suited for peacekeeping. Ideas that men are inherently more violent and have a male capacity for violence, whereas women are inherently more peaceful, are problematic because, despite De Groot’s assertions, they are simply not backed up by the evidence. Such arguments reinforce stereotypes about women being “softer,” linking women to peace in essentialist ways. De Groot is well aware that he relies on gender essentialism, and expresses impatience with gender theories which try and get to grips with how gender functions. He notes that his argument that women soldiers make better peacekeepers

⁵ In all missions in 2001, the proportion of women never exceeded 6% of military personnel, and no more than 16% of the UN civilian police force. Where women are present, it is at the low levels of secretaries and low level administrators (Higate and Henry 2004: 14).

plays upon gender stereotypes that have many feminists tearing their hair... But peacekeeping is a practical problem in which gender theory has little place. If women are, for whatever reason, calmer and more conciliatory than men, then they have an important role to play. The UN, in other words, might want its female warriors to remain womanly (De Groot 2001: 34-35).

However, far from the irrelevance which De Groot assigns it, the question of whether women peacekeepers reinforce or challenge gender stereotypes is crucial for anti-militarist feminists. As the previous section made clear, if militarism and war are to be eradicated, the mutually reinforcing dynamic of masculinity and war must be challenged. If the solution is deemed to be an increase in women soldiers because they are inherently more peaceful, the association of men with war and women with peace is merely reinforced. As we have seen, this gendered dichotomy not only privileges war and makes it more difficult to challenge, but it also prevents women from being taken seriously in public life. If anti-militarist feminists are to achieve their goal of replacing war and militarism with genuine long lasting peace, the solution cannot be for women to be included in militaries on the basis of their “natural” peacekeeping skills (Cockburn and Hubic 2002: 116; also see Hudson 2005).

Doubts concerning women soldiers make up just one strand of feminist critique of SCR 1325, however, as the high hopes generated by its adoption in 2000 are replaced by cynicism over the extent to which it has achieved meaningful change. Whitworth argues that UN initiatives connected to SCR 1325 treat gender as an instrument for solving problems, robbing it of its radicalism as a critical concept. As such, gender analyses become part of the technical solutions to conflict prioritised by the UN, rather than exposing the underlying roots of conflict and generating radical new solutions (Whitworth 2004: 120-139). Even within its own definition of success, SCR 1325 has been deemed to be a disappointment as gender issues continue to be shunted to the bottom of the pile, to be dealt with when the ‘real crisis’ is over (Barnes 2006; Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, and Parpart 2005; Whitworth 2004: 127-132)

A crucial aspect of 1325 is considered to be the training of peacekeepers, so that they recognise the gendered impact of war and, crucially, are less likely to participate in sexual

exploitation. Such training packages⁶ are often excellent in and of themselves, but it is questionable how much one course which aims at understanding gender, dismantling gender stereotypes, sensitising soldiers to the power relations inherent in gender, and so on, can actually achieve. Can it compete with the many messages about appropriate soldierly masculinity which have been absorbed, learnt, practiced and rewarded through years of participation in a military culture? Angela Mackay, who developed the UN gender and peacekeeping training package, is worth quoting at length:

That there is a contradiction between the warrior soldiers, trained for arms and to fight and kill, and the image of the peacekeeper, trained to negotiate, protect, and defuse tension, is not news. The challenge we face is not only that the peacekeeper is asked to think outside the box of all previous training but that the population peacekeepers are sent to work within, so frequently and readily identified as "helpless victims" in need of protection, are to be thought of as complex people to work and consult with. The international community asks the peacekeeper, on the one hand, to provide that protection, to fill the void vacated by the men at war who, in every society we can mention, are responsible for the defense of their community, while on the other hand suggesting that these are not helpless victims, but active agents, thinking, competent, strong and able. Women. Women without their men, for whom the experience of conflict has overturned their world, yet who are survivors. We ask peacekeepers to support as well as protect, to enforce human rights they themselves may barely know exist. We tell them to be sensitive to other cultural norms, customs and behaviours when they themselves are saturated in one of the most pervasive and powerful, masculinized professional cultures in the world, a culture to which they must truly belong if they are to fulfil their warrior function. These contradictions remain a stumbling block (Mackay 2005: 278)

Mackay acknowledges that the contradictions inherent in asking those that are trained for war to bring about peace remain a stumbling block, but she notes successes from her observations of training as well as challenges (Mackay 2005: 277). Indeed, several authors, including some anti-militarist feminists, raise the question of the potential of soldiers to bring about peace. Some focus on the benefits to be gained from including more women soldiers in peacekeeping operations (De Groot 2001; Olsson and Tryggstad 2001a; Stiehm 2001), a position which, as mentioned above, is problematic insofar as it reinforces stereotypes about the pacific nature of women. Some focus on the potential of the military

⁶ See for example www.genderandpeacekeeping.org

and soldiers to do good as part of a new conception of “cosmopolitan peacekeeping”, whilst neglecting gender (Elliot and Cheeseman 2005b; Kaldor 2000; Wheeler 2000; Woodhouse and Ramsbotham 2005). Although these arguments call for the creation of a “new kind of soldier” whose loyalties are to “abstract cosmopolitan ideals in place of patriotism” (Kaldor 2000), the absence of gender, and in particular the role of masculinities in motivating soldiers, from their accounts makes them inadequate.

Others bring more critical questions about gender relations and prevailing assumptions about both masculinity and femininity into the equation, however, and still suggest that soldiers may have a positive role to play. Connell, for example, argues that some of the qualities in ‘traditional’ definitions of masculinity, such as courage, steadfastness, ambition, are needed in the cause of peace (Connell 2000a: 30). As masculinities are “ways of living” carried out in relation to the social environment in which men live and work, participation in peacekeeping itself may influence the construction of masculinities in more positive directions. For example, Higate and Henry note that peacekeeping gives rise to positive aspects of militarized masculinities, such as discipline and loyalty (Higate and Henry 2004: 493). Moreover, several studies point to the fact that women in areas of conflict often request military peacekeepers and welcome the security they provide (Cockburn and Hubic 2002; Rehn and Sirleaf 2002; Whitworth 2004: 2). Indeed, Cockburn and Hubic’s research with women’s organisations in Bosnia suggests that if soldiers and militaries make several crucial changes they may well be part of the solution to both insecurity and conflict and gender inequality. These observations suggest that there may be a more positive story to be told about using soldiers to bring about peace.

Before turning to examine whether there are any signs of this more positive story in the British context, the final section of this chapter turns briefly to academic IR in order to argue that the problems of war, militarism and peacekeeping outlined above have been exacerbated because mainstream approaches to IR have been gender blind. It demonstrates how mainstream theories neglect the way in which gender – as both a process of identity construction and a symbolic structure – contributes to the enduring nature of militarism and war. This is particularly true of Realism, the theory which has dominated the academic study of IR and governed the practice of most governments, diplomats and militaries, but feminist perspectives have remained relatively neglected and marginalised throughout the discipline. Only those more critical perspectives which take gender seriously provide a

conceptual basis for the anti-militarist feminist project of replacing war and militarism with non-violent ways of resolving conflicts.

III: Masculinity in IR Theories

The Gender Blindness of Realism

Due to the absence of formal government structures at the global level, Realism has viewed the international as an anarchical realm, within which states must look after themselves if they are to survive (see for example Carr 1946; Morgenthau 1978; Waltz 1979). With a heritage reaching back as far as Ancient Greece and the likes of Thucydides, who proclaimed that “the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept” (Thucydides 1954), Realists emphasise power, and in particular military power, as the most effective means of prioritising self-help. Security is thus a key concept for Realists, defined as the stability provided by states through their military power. All outsiders are viewed as potential threats, and the best that can be hoped for is a negative peace, that is, the absence of war, achieved through ensuring a balance of power between states in the world (Dunne and Schmidt 2001). Alternative policies, such as disarmament, development and more positive conceptions of peace as social justice are dismissed as hopelessly utopian (Steans 2006: 65). Militarism is thus an inevitable – even desirable – outcome of an uncertain and risky world; for Realists, gender is irrelevant – the fact is states must prepare for war in order to ensure their security.

This focus on insecurity, conflict, and the need for military power, however, is far from being an objective analysis of how the world works. Realism attempts to explain the nature of the international system by building up theory from a model of man as rational, autonomous and fundamentally self-interested (Peterson 1992; Steans 2006: 25-6; Tickner 1992; 2001; True 2001: 250). Feminists argue that this picture is not realistic – humans are not abstracted from their situatedness in the concrete world, their family, community, history, particular prejudices, interests and needs, nor do they always act to maximise self-interest, so to build up a theory from this model is inherently flawed. They draw attention to the relatedness of all humans, and argue that this model leads to different understandings of how the world works and a different concept of security.

In particular, feminists question the prioritisation of certain security threats over others. Why, when more people die from hunger every year than have been killed in conflict since 1989 (Smith, 2003: 110)⁷, are the possible attacks of another state or terrorist group considered more realistic, important and immediate threats than the fundamental threats to security inherent in poverty, HIV/AIDS, or environmental destruction?

Whose security are we talking about when we envisage such threats and at what cost are we securing them? Who has felt secure in this country and who hasn't – in terms of gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.? (Bunch 2003).

Of course, pointing out that poverty and ill-health cause more untimely deaths than terrorism and war is not to argue that war and conflict should not be taken seriously, nor to miss the crucial point that poverty and conflict are connected. It is rather to point to the way in which traditional conceptualisations are inadequate and partial, and, of particular interest here, gender blind, as it is the threats of poverty and ill health that disproportionately affect women who make up seventy per cent of the 1.5 billion people living on a \$1 a day or less (United Nations 2000b). Whilst wars and conflicts are seen as problems to be addressed, the prioritisation of Realist perspectives in IR has led to this 'structural violence' being understood as normal and unproblematic – just the way the world is (Peterson 1992). Feminists have also drawn attention to the particular security threats faced by women because they are women: gender based violence against women. Gender based violence against women takes many forms – from the domestic abuse which takes place in private homes, to the trafficking of women and girls for sexual slavery – and has been termed the most common crime in the world (Amnesty 2004), leading Zalewski to comment: "State security often has little meaning when the struggle for bodily integrity is a daily challenge" (Zalewski 1995: 341). Focussing attention on military threats to the state misses the point that the sources of insecurity for women are often found in the domestic sphere. As Peterson notes:

⁷ The State of the World Atlas records that seven million people have been killed in conflict since 1989, but that nine million die every year from hunger related disease and that two billion people – two thirds of the world's population – suffer from malnutrition (Smith, 2003: 110). It also predicts that between 2000 and 2020, 68 million people will die from HIV/AIDS, 55 million of them in Africa (Smith: 2003: 112).

If a person is murdered because of his or her politics, the world justifiably responds with outrage. But if a person is beaten or allowed to die because she is female, the world dismisses it as “cultural tradition.” Where is the outrage at female sexual slavery and ‘sex tourism’? At ‘dowry deaths’, ‘bride burning’ and genital mutilation? At the restriction of women’s activities, the regulation of their reproduction, and their deaths through female infanticide? (Peterson 1990: 305)

Feminists have pointed out that the public world of politics, states and conflicts is associated with men and taken seriously, and the private world of the home and reproduction is associated with women and seen as less important. Feminists argue that it is this public/private dichotomy that enables the things which are of greatest threat to women to be neglected and not considered as security issues. Security must be redefined, they argue, in order to capture the reality of the threats faced by real people, not the abstract man of Realist theory.

The usual rejoinder to such arguments is that IR as a discipline must focus on military threats to the state for the sake of conceptual clarity. Women’s Studies and domestic laws can deal with the issue of gender based violence against women, Development Studies and policy makers can deal with poverty; it is not within the realm of IR and security studies. This defence, however, faces at least four counter arguments. Firstly, it fails to acknowledge the way in which gender operates as a symbolic system within the Academy, privileging some knowledges – IR – over others – Women’s Studies or Development Studies, which are feminized and seen as “soft issues,” undeserving of the respect, resources, media coverage and urgency given to the “hard power” relations between states in IR. Secondly, it acts to dull our theoretical imaginations: what if there is a connection between interpersonal violence and the violence of war? If we compartmentalise the two at the outset, we make it less likely that this key question gets taken seriously. Thirdly, Realism assumes that if states are secure, the people within them will be too, but feminist work into structural and gender based violence has demonstrated that this is not the case, and that states are more likely to function as protection rackets (Peterson 1992; Pettman 1996; Stiehm 1982; Young 2003), charging for providing security whilst being complicit in creating the threat. Finally, whilst ignoring gender in their analysis, Realists construct a particular gendered model of the world that then serves to justify and perpetuate the social and political order it describes. IR theories are not merely tools for analysing a world ‘out there’ – they are also involved in constructing that world. Realism can thus be seen as a self-fulfilling prophecy, where the

discourse of danger and hostility justify the system of confrontation and competition (Steans 2006: 37; True 2001: 247-257).

Challenges to Realism in IR

Feminists are not the only critics of Realism within the IR community. Liberalism, Realism's major theoretical rival, traditionally takes a rather more optimistic view about the potential for peace in the international system, placing more faith in the potential of international institutions, such as United Nations peacekeeping, along with diplomacy, and international law, thus countering the self-fulfilling pessimism of Realism much criticised by feminists. At the same time, however, Liberals follow Realists in failing to explicitly consider gender whilst making the same gendered assumptions about man, the state and security (Steans 2006: 48; True 2001: 247-257). Liberal theories fail to analyse the structural sources of conflict, and can therefore imply it is caused by mere misunderstandings, rather than injustices and inequalities – which as we have seen are gendered – inherent in the current global order (Whitworth 1989: 269).

Other theorists have attempted to address this gap by focusing on global economic structures and arguing that militarism and war are the logical extensions of capitalism (Chomsky 2006; Koistinen 1980; Melman 1974). In this Marxist inspired analysis, multinational corporations are at the root of the problem: their lust for profit driving military interventions to carve out and protect interests overseas. Such arguments are compelling, but again, ignore the role of gender. Despite drawing attention to the people who stand to benefit from militarism, they take for granted that most of these corporate executives, government officials, arms dealers and military personnel are men (Enloe 1993: 40-45). Despite focussing on the detrimental effect of the arms trade on development, they are not curious about its gendered impacts (Steans 2006: 70-72).⁸ As a result, these theorists neglect the role that gender plays as a system of meaning underpinning the entire process of militarism.

⁸ Thirty three developing countries spend more on the military than on either education or health, with seven spending more on the military than education and health combined, policy decisions which put women in particular, as those often ascribed responsibility for the welfare of their families, under severe strain. According to the Control Arms Campaign, 2004, Oman, Syria, Burma, Sudan, Pakistan, Eritrea and Burundi spend more on the military than health and education combined; Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Iran, Cambodia, China, Ecuador, Nigeria, Rwanda, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia and Sierra Leone spend more on both health and education taken individually; and Macedonia, Laos, Morocco, Lebanon, Egypt, India, Armenia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Yemen, Cameroon and Nepal spend more on the military than either education or health. See "Guns

Meanwhile, an increasing awareness throughout the 1980s and 1990s that many of the threats facing humanity were linked to the environment (climate change, resource degradation, pollution), demographics (migration, population growth) and identity politics, led many to argue for a broader understanding of security than one based on the military capabilities of states (Kennedy 1993; Lynn-Jones and Miller 1995; Mathews 1989; Ullmann 1983). An important contribution came from Buzan, and others in the Copenhagen School (Buzan 1991; 1997; Buzan, Waever, and De Wilde 1998) who expanded the security agenda beyond the high politics of military security; problematised the state as protector; and recognised that states do not only act self-interestedly to maximise power but also respect norms, rules and institutions and sometimes act co-operatively, all of which are highlighted by feminists in IR. However, despite the broader view of security and a more nuanced view of the state, Buzan et al retain a state-centric approach and, crucially, by failing to consider the structural reasons why security threats faced by women are often not able to be constructed as collective, important security threats, remain blind to gender (Hansen 2000).

A further important development in security studies has been the development of the concept of Human Security, championed by the UN, many NGOs as well as several academics, as a much needed new approach to the insecurities threatening many in the world today. As Kofi Annan describes it, “Human Security in its broadest sense embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her own potential” (Annan 2000). The concerns of human security clearly overlap with anti-militarist feminist redefinitions of security and concerns that peacekeeping operations address structural injustice, especially “people centred” approaches, which focus on the collectivities in which people are embedded, highlighting the multiple sources of insecurity which people face according to their specific circumstances (gender as well as class and race) (Booth 2004; Steans 2006: 77).

People-centred approaches are associated with Critical Security Studies, a collection of approaches to IR which emphasise the possibility of change, agency and emancipation in the

or Growth? Assessing the impact of arms sales on sustainable development,” Control Arms Campaign, June 2004, available from www.controlarms.org/the_issue/guns_or_growth.htm

international system, as opposed to the ever present risk of conflict stressed in Realism (Booth 2004; Krause and Williams 1997).⁹ Ontologically, as opposed to problem-solving approaches which accept the parameters of the prevailing order, critical approaches stand apart from that order and ask how it came about (Cox 1981; Hoffman 1987). Epistemologically, critical approaches are concerned with the processes through which individuals, collectivities and threats are constructed, exploring and illuminating how ideas, identities and interests matter in international relations (True 2001: 263). For example, attention is focused on the problems of exclusion and hierarchy that result from the processes of Othering involved in discourses of both war and peacekeeping. It is within the Critical Security Studies school of thought that we find the critique of peacekeeping as a “sticking plaster” approach to global conflict and insecurity (Bellamy and Williams 2004).

Many feminist IR scholars, especially those who express post-modern or post-structuralist perspectives, share Critical Security Studies theorists’ interest in how ideas, identities and interests are important in international relations; moreover, feminists are able to advance such theories by uncovering the gendered processes through which these ideas, identities and interests are shaped (True 2001: 263). Some feminists argue that rather than conceptualise security as something which states can possess or achieve, we need to grasp the way in which security is always partial and elusive, involving struggle and contestation. Moreover, it is a process which must involve subjects – including women – as agents in the provision of their own security (Sylvester 1994; Young 2003). Conceptualising security as a socially constructed process is a radical departure from conceptualising security threats as objective, existing ‘out there’ in the ‘real world’. It is this challenge to the ontological and epistemological assumptions of mainstream IR theories that links Critical Security Studies theorists and many feminists. It is in the potentially fruitful cross fertilization of these two perspectives that this thesis is situated, a methodological perspective which will be fleshed out in chapter four.

⁹ I take Critical Security Studies to include Critical Theory and Constructivism, whilst recognising that others might categorise these schools of thought differently. They are also sometimes labelled differently, eg as Reflectivist, Postpositivist or Post-structuralist perspectives. These terminological issues will be discussed further in chapter four.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that ideas about soldiering are intimately connected to ideas about what it is to be a man, resulting in a mutually reinforcing dynamic between war, soldiering and combat and the construction of masculinities. It has also detailed feminist concerns about how such masculinities can hinder peacekeeping operations, drawing attention to the evidence of sexual exploitation which has appeared to be the inevitable consequence of the deployment of soldiers to areas of conflict around the world. Feminist concerns about peacekeeping go beyond a concern with sexual exploitation, however, with many anti-militarist feminists viewing peacekeeping as symptomatic of a problem-solving approach to international relations (associated with mainstream approaches) which overlooks the gendered injustice and inequalities causing conflict. In order for interventions to be effective in bringing about peace, not only do particular constructions of military masculinity need to be challenged, but so too do understandings of conflict which neglect gender. These two challenges go hand in hand as military masculinities are constructed in relation to feminised Others, with implications not only for the women with whom soldiers come into contact, but for entire peoples and nations in areas of conflict, which are feminised, labelled as backward and in need of protection. Some theorists have suggested that such a challenge is possible and that military masculinities are capable of positive change. This thesis addresses this question in the context of the British Army. Are there any signs of more positive military masculinities associated with or resulting from military involvement in peacekeeping? If there are new constructions of masculinity, do they contribute to tackling some of the more fundamental problems of peacekeeping highlighted by anti-militarist feminists and others? In order to address these questions, the next chapter introduces the literature on masculinity construction in the specific case of the British Army.

Chapter Three: British Military Masculinities – “Physically Fit, Mentally Brave, Emotionally Hard.”

The previous chapter introduced the anti-militarist feminist argument that there exists a mutually reinforcing dynamic between masculinities and militaries which plays a part in causing and exacerbating militarism and war. This chapter considers how this dynamic plays out in the case of the British Army. It suggests that there is a tendency for anti-militarist feminist arguments to downplay the role of individual agency and to overplay the intentionality of elites, implying that masculinities are constructed by the military hierarchy as an intentional policy in order to fill the ranks. Gender theory literature indicates that identity construction is rather more complex, involving individual agency rather than a predetermined socialisation of boys and girls into gender roles, and resulting in fragmented and contradictory gender identities. This chapter explores this process in the context of the British Army, in order to get at as full and as accurate a picture as possible of military masculinities in the British Army, including all the nuance and contradiction, as a basis for exploring their construction on Peace Support Operations (PSOs).

The first section introduces some of the literature on masculinity construction in the British Army, arguing that there is both evidence to support the anti-militarist feminist position that Army culture and training produces a sexist, racist and homophobic form of military masculinity, and evidence which disputes it, suggesting much more contradiction and complexity. The second section discusses how we can make sense of this situation whereby a powerful argument links war, militarism, and the problems of peacekeeping to particular constructions of military masculinity, when at the same time, on closer inspection, there appear to be many ways of being a man and a soldier in the British Army. This is achieved by introducing Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1987; 1995; 2002a). Hegemonic masculinity is the term given to the model of masculinity which commands the most power and respect, defining what counts as appropriate manly behaviour. It enables us to conceptualise the way in which certain ways of being a man remain dominant in what appears to be a complex and fluid process of gender identity construction. It is suggested here that it is the hegemony of particular models of masculinity within the British Army – those associated with the skills and practices of combat – which is problematic, rather than all military masculinities, for, as we shall see, there is an “increasingly diverse range of

masculinities converging on the sites of war and military action" (Morgan 1994: 173). It is the hegemony of this "combat model" which needs to be challenged if soldiers are to be effective on PSOs.

I: The Construction of British Military Masculinities

Does the Military Make a Man of You?

As the previous chapter detailed, anti-militarist feminists focus on the way in which the military is a crucial site for the construction of masculinity. There is a tendency in this approach, however, to imply that masculinities are the result of intentional policies designed to aid recruitment and operational effectiveness. Assertions that masculinity is an "artificial status which is typically constructed around a culture's need for brave and disciplined soldiers" (Goldstein 2001: 283), or that the soldier is "constituted" through "often violently misogynist, racist and homophobic messages delivered through basic training, initiation and indoctrination exercises" (Whitworth 2004: 152), risk oversimplifying the complex processes of gender construction. Goldstein, for instance, asserts that the toughening up or "gender moulding" of boys happens from early childhood "precisely because they may need to fight wars one day" (Goldstein 2001: 287). Can we really maintain that the entire gender order of UK society is due to the demands of governmental and military elites to fill the ranks? This is to suggest a degree of power and control which seems unlikely in complex modern societies. It also denies agency to men, who are rather more active participants in the construction of masculinities than the anti-militarist feminist critique implies. The risk is that it forecloses the possibility of theorizing more positive masculinities. As Dawson argues, the tendency of some feminists to emphasise the mutually reinforcing nature of masculinity and militarism (and, in some cases, to imply that masculinities alone are to blame for war) can cement the association of masculinity and military prowess and thereby reify the very gendered dichotomies that feminists aim to challenge (Dawson 1994: 16-17). While most anti-militarist feminists are careful not to reinforce essentialist views and gendered dichotomies, the tendency to over-emphasise socialisation as a result of military culture and training (structure) at the expense of soldiers' individual actions (agency) is common and, as a result, their accounts often do not fully capture the complexity of gender construction or of men's contradictory experiences in the military. It is not unusual, for example, for soldiers to claim both that war is hell and that it was the best time of their lives: "that grievous trial, which yet they would not have missed" (Hynes 1998: 22, 283). There is

an evident need for more attention to be paid to the complexity and context of gender construction. This section considers whether the concerns of anti-militarist feminists about military masculinities borne out by the British case. It suggests that British military historians, sociologists and gender theorists provide evidence which reinforces the anti-militarist feminist contention that the military constructs particular forms of violent, misogynist masculinity, whilst also introducing information which complicates this construction.

Historically, British military masculinities have been intertwined with Empire:

During the growth of popular imperialism in mid-to-late nineteenth century, heroic masculinity became fused in an especially potent configuration with representations of British imperial identity. This linked together the new imperialist patriotism, the virtues of manhood, and war as its ultimate test and opportunity. A 'real man' would henceforth be defined and recognized as one who was prepared to fight (and, if necessary, to sacrifice his life) for Queen, Country and Empire (Dawson 1994: 3).

Ever since, Dawson argues, there has been a “fascination with all things military in British culture.” The historical imaginings of the soldier hero of adventure and the patriotic mother have put down deep roots into British society. "To grow up a boy in Britain seemed to have meant, for generations, an unavoidable encounter with the potency of national military manhood" (Dawson 1994: 3-4; also see Rutherford 1997).

Today, British society continues to convey the many cultural messages emphasising the masculinity of warfare, such as the clichés that the military will "make a man of you" and "turn boys into men" (Hockey 2003: 15). The message that boys can demonstrate their manliness if they are brave, strong and can fight pervade British books, films and art:

Despite far-reaching political, social and technological changes, the warrior still seems to be a key symbol of masculinity. In statues, heroic paintings, comic books, popular films, the gendered connotations are inescapable. The stance, the facial expressions, and the weapons clearly connote aggression, courage, a capacity for violence, and, sometimes, a willingness for sacrifice (Morgan 1994: 165-6).

The literary genre of real soldiers' tales proves increasingly popular in British culture (Woodward 1998: 288), and soldiers' tales often involve linking themselves to idealised warriors similar to the heroic figures in combat literature and films (Bourke 1999: 370). British Army recruitment materials have also traditionally emphasised the masculinity of soldiering (Brown 2002; Hockey 2003: 15; McManners 1993: 17).

Moreover, the crucial insight that gender is used to motivate men to fight appears to be confirmed by accounts of military training in the UK. Hockey makes clear in detailed notes on his own British Army infantry experience that training is a set of challenges to be passed and "role effectiveness is then explicitly linked by instructional staff to masculine potency" (Hockey 2003: 16). As one Corporal puts it: "Soldiers should be young and fit, rough and nasty, not powderpuffs!" Hockey describes some of the activities and notes that:

The ability to cope with these physical demands constitutes a prime indicator of the individual's masculinity, and this message is repeatedly reinforced by instructional staff. The unfit are then by definition unmasculine, and the only way forward is to try harder, get fitter and become "real men."...Recruits have to learn to endure, to "soldier on," they are told by instruction staff; and this stoicism is firmly linked, once again, to a particular form of masculinity (Hockey 2003: 17).

Throughout his field notes, there is the familiar use of linking failure to perform with derogatory terms for women and femininity, with the recruits taunted that they are "women," "girls," "tarts," and that they have "no balls" (Hockey 2003 17-18). Stalling at any physical activity inevitably resulted in derision from the instructors, who would equate this lack of physicality with being women, shouting that "girls can do better," or that "you bunch of girls are always at the back!" To be an infantryman, the epitome of the heroic warrior, you had to soldier on in the face of all sorts of hazards and hardships (Hockey 2003: 17). McManners, too, draws attention to the crucial role of gender in British army training, where "supermasculinity" is held up as the ideal, attainable only by military personnel:

Sex is an important tool in recruit training. As only trained soldiers can achieve 'supermasculinity', recruits are made to feel that they belong to a lesser species of uncertain gender. In the

breaking down process, they are often degraded through being feminized by their instructors; they will become 'men' only on successfully finishing the recruit course (McManners 1993: 112).

In SAS training in particular, as Woodward records, the emphasis is on “physical fitness, determination and pitting oneself against the elements. Publications and television programmes celebrating the work of the Special Forces identify outdoors survival as a key test of one’s manhood” (Woodward 1998: 287):

I always say, lads, Long Drag [an SAS selection procedure involving a 65km forced march] is a landmark in a man’s life. You’re still only a third of the way through the course but it’s Long Drag that makes a man... When a man gets through Long Drag, I respect him. I always listen to what he has to say, even if he goes on to fail the course (Ballinger 1992: 113).

Ballinger repeatedly notes that failure on any of these selection exercises is equated with effeminacy; failures are labelled “Girl Guides”, “fairies” and “queers.” As Lynne Segal puts it, military training for men in the UK “is explicitly designed to promote a particular kind of aggressive masculinity – ‘woman’, ‘cunt’, ‘queer’, being the ubiquitous insults hurled by sergeant majors at each new recruit to ‘toughen’ him up for military manhood” (Segal 1997: 98; also see Muir 1993).

Multiple, Dynamic and Contradictory Masculinities

It appears, then, that in many ways the British case reflects that of the anti-militarist feminist literature about military masculinities in general. At the same time, many of these authors draw attention to the agency of the soldiers and how they actively negotiate their masculinity. Morgan makes the point that the body is central to this process. Whilst military training involves the “disciplining, controlling and occasional mortification of the body” (Morgan 1994: 167), and many theorists have drawn attention to the effects of shaving recruits’ hair and making them don identical outfits (see for example Woodward 1998: 292), men are far from passive recipients of some sort of gender moulding. Men desire and work hard at creating bodies which are strong, tough and fit and many enjoy performing their military role. As one British soldier in the First World War noted in his diary: “I looked at my great murderous maulers and wondered idly how they had evolved from the sensitive

manicured fingers that used to pen theses on “Colloidal Fuel” and “The Theory of Heat Distribution in Cylinder Walls.” And I found the comparison good” (cited in Bourke 1996: 15-16). More recent soldiers’ tales also record the desire and satisfaction of reaching peak fitness and transforming themselves from boys into soldiers (McLaughlin 2007; Preece 2004).

We can see then, that the construction of military masculinity involves more agency than some feminist critiques suggest. Masculinities are as much about individual needs, desires and experiences as they are about cultural definitions of appropriate masculine behaviour: it is important to pay attention to both aspects, and crucially, how they interact (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 595). To imply that masculinities are moulded from above by a powerful elite who conspire to keep men in power suggests a level of intentionality that is hard to justify and neglects the active participation of actually embodied men (Connell 1995). The construction of masculinity can involve living up to an ideal, aspiring but failing to reach that ideal, resisting the ideal and even recasting the ideal. Of course, this agency is not unlimited, but exists within structural constraints and in rule-bound, traditional, hierarchical institutions such as the military, these structural constraints are more limiting than most. Nonetheless, there is some room for agency. Connell suggests “body-reflexive practice” as a useful term to capture this understanding of bodies as both *objects of* social practice and *agents in* social practice: “The practices in which bodies are involved form social structures and personal trajectories which in turn provide the conditions of new practices in which bodies are addressed and involved” (Connell 1995: 59-64; 2002a: 47). This active construction of masculinity means that there is more than one military masculinity. Some men rise to the rhetoric and become the epitome of the heroic warrior. Others attempt to resist the socialisation processes and do so in a variety of ways to a variety of different extents. Most adopt or enact some aspects of the idealized notion of the soldier but not all of them.

Of course, not all aspects of the idealized notion of a heroic warrior are open to all soldiers. Different branches, ranks, regiments, and job specialisations, for example, offer different opportunities for soldiers to negotiate different masculinities. The masculinity of the engineer or medic differs from the masculinity of the infantryman, with the infantryman’s proximity to the front line and actual combat making his masculinity more likely to be closely linked with the ideal notion. The masculinity of the Officer differs from the

masculinity of the ordinary soldier; a distinction in Britain which overlaps with and helps consolidate the class system, with Officer masculinities associated with power, authority, leadership, rationality and intelligence, and soldier masculinities associated more with physical strength and fitness (Hooper 2000: 84; McManners 1993: 24-5; Morgan 1994: 175). Race too differentiates British soldiers, with allegations of racism within the Army (BBC News Online 2007) and an “informal but active colour bar” to some regiments (McManners 1993: 29). Soldiers of colour therefore negotiate their masculinity in relation to the experience of being Other, whatever their proximity to the idealised notion of a heroic warrior. Dandeker and Mason suggest that all types of difference which deviate from white, male, heterosexual norm are in some way problematic to the Army (Dandeker and Mason 2003). Age, education, experience, geographical origin and whether you are a regular soldier or a part-time, Territorial Army (TA), soldier are also significant markers of difference in the British military.

Rather than conceiving of identities as a collection of discrete elements, gender theorists alert us to the way in which social divisions are interlaced with each other so that, for example, class and race are always gendered and the experiences of gender are always mediated through class and race (hooks 1984; 1989). As Peterson and True put it, “gender infuses all our identities so that race, age, class, ethnicity, ability and nationality are also gender specific identities” (Peterson and True 1998: 16). The opportunities for multiplicity and contradiction – in a comparison between, for example, a working class Scottish infantryman in the Black Watch Regiment, an Eton educated Cavalry Officer from the Home Counties, and an Engineer from Fiji – are thus endless.

Indeed, Hynes concludes his examination of war diaries of the twentieth century with the comment that contradiction is the key theme in all the soldiers’ tales (Hynes 1998: 283; also see Bourke 1999). Similarly, Morgan makes contradiction the structuring principle of his reflections on British military masculinities (Morgan 1994). McManners’ discussion of courage, heroism and combat illustrates some of the contradictions. He writes that courage and heroism are valorised as masculine and deeply rooted in the military psyche and law (McManners 1993: 77). Most soldiers want to live up to the label of being courageous as to be a coward is one of the worst offences for a military man (McManners 1993: 75). In reality of course, everyone is a mixture of hero and coward; moreover, given that very few

soldiers are actually involved in combat, courage and heroism are as much the stuff of myth as reality:

Most soldiers, unless they have been in combat themselves, are in the strange position of being experts in something that they do not fully understand. Their attitude to battle and, particularly, to cowardice and heroism, are not based on personal experience but on what they have learned from others. The British Army has a vast reservoir of experience from which its expertise, traditions and attitudes have grown. Military law comes from the same source. Peacetime soldiers are given very clear ideas on what constitutes heroism and cowardice – also drawn from the reservoir – whereas soldiers with combat experience, who have seen it for themselves, are not always quite so certain (McManners 1993: 95).

As well as the ambiguity about what courage actually is there is uncertainty about its value. Although courage and heroism have consistently been the quintessential admirable traits for British soldiers, “flamboyant courage” can be mocked (Bourke 1999: 370; Hynes 1998: 283). For example, Hockey notes that risk taking was frowned upon on tour in Northern Ireland, and “hero” became a pejorative term for those that took unnecessary risks. His field notes record the adaptation of the ideal type of masculinity constructed in training: “Warrior hero myths propagated by popular literature and MoD publicity meet head on the ugly, brutal, sordid business of armed conflict, and a modification of aggressive conduct ensues” (Hockey 2003: 21).

Further contradictions are found in the realm of emotions, such as tears and compassion. Being a soldier is about strength, toughness, endurance and living up to the notion that “big boys don’t cry.” Yet, as anyone familiar with war memoirs and films can testify, they often include soldiers showing emotion, crying, and handling others’ grief with compassion and empathy. For example, a Falklands veteran recorded:

After Goose Green, I insisted that we bury our dead and give the soldiers time to grieve. It’s important. A hole was dug by a bulldozer on the side of a hill and we literally carried each of our friends and put them down side by side and we said our prayers and cried (Bilton and Kosminsky 1990).

Similarly, Hockey recorded this attitude in Northern Ireland:

He was crying quite a lot after B_____ got taken out [killed]. So I just told the rest of the lads to clear off for a bit, and just talked to him quietly, put my arm round him and let him get it out (Hockey 2003: 23).

Recording his own experiences of emotional expression in the British forces, Morgan suggests that: "War provides the opportunity for the display of other characteristics more conventionally associated with the feminine than with the masculine" (Morgan 1994: 177). As well as physical displays of mutual concern and care, he cites willingness to show fear and pain and contempt for the abstractions to do with patriotism or fighting for democracy. In a similar vein, Hooper highlights the way in which obedience, subservience and attention to dress detail – also qualities and practices usually associated more with femininity than masculinity – are required in the Army (Hooper 1998: 31-32). The example of obedience alerts us to questions of the dynamism of masculinities – how they change over time – and how they intersect with nationality. In the post Cold War operational context, obedience in soldiers is arguably much less of a valued trait. As McManners argues, "the complexity of modern warfare has made mindless obedience too dangerous. Soldiers are now expected to question and clarify their orders, often deciding for themselves what must be done" (McManners 1993: 96). This is perhaps particularly the case in the British system, where the principle of "Mission Command" devolves relatively more decision making power down the chain of command to individual teams and troops than can be seen in other national militaries. British soldiers are encouraged to feel pride and loyalty towards their own national identity and way of doing things; constructing their masculinity in relation to that of soldiers of other nationalities thus becomes an important part of identity formation for British soldiers.

Thus we can see that British military masculinities are multiple – intersecting with race, class, rank and job specification; contradictory – combining, for instance, the stiff upper lip with tears and compassion; fluid – containing practices which in other contexts would be considered 'feminine'; and dynamic – changing, for instance, in response to new operational contexts. This complicates any notion that military masculinity is a unitary property of all soldiers. As Morgan suggests, "One has only, therefore, to listen to some actual accounts of war and battle to be aware of a model of masculinity more complex and contradictory than

the one that generally emerges from much of the recent literature on men and their identities" (Morgan 1994: 177).

II: Gender Relations and Hegemonic Masculinity in the British Army

Making Sense of Multiple and Contradictory Masculinities

How do we make sense of this multiplicity and contradiction? If there are so many military masculinities, and so much contradiction within them, is masculinity a useful concept? If anti-militarist feminists want to identify what it is that is problematic about soldiers on PSOs, can the concept of military masculinity be of any use? As Hooper writes:

Critics might argue that if men routinely exhibit so-called feminine characteristics, and if the similar activities and qualities can be labelled masculine or feminine depending on interpretation and a change of emphasis, and if the term *masculinity* has no stable ingredients, then why take the claims of feminists seriously at all? (Hooper 2000: 62-63).

The solution to this predicament is to pay attention to the way in which gender, as well as being an aspect of individual identity, operates to structure relations. Feminists have pointed to the way in which processes of differentiating between men and women have involved power (see for example Cockburn 2003: 6). The growing literature on masculinities has observed that power and inequality are similarly involved in differentiating between groups of men (Brod and Kaufman 1994; Cheng 1996; Connell 1995; Hooper 2000; Whitehead 2002). Masculinities are not merely multiple and equal; it is not the case that there are lots of different ways of being a man, all deemed to be of equal worth and respect in society. Rather, masculinities exist in relations of hierarchy, dominated by a loosely coherent and evolving hegemonic form. Thus the feminist argument that men as a whole have power over women is complicated but not countered by the observation that, at the same time, different groups of men have power over other groups of men. Indeed, the concept of hegemonic masculinity enables us to recognise the multiplicity and contradictory nature of masculinities yet retain feminist insights into the connection between masculinity and power (Hooper 2000: 56). I suggest in this section that focusing on the way in which gender structures relations between both women and men and men and other men, and in particular the concept of hegemonic masculinity, enables us to reconcile the multiplicity and contradiction of military masculinities with the claims of anti-militarist feminists.

Hegemonic masculinity, as the Gramscian origins of the term would suggest, dominates not through force, but through consent (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 594; Connell 1987: 184). The majority of men respect and value this way of being a man, even if the majority of men do not enact it. It is not a personality type, or a syndrome, but rather “a question of how particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance” (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 592). Hegemonic masculinity is an ideal, a myth, but with material effects: those who most closely enact these practices remain dominant, and those who fail to match up to remain subordinate. A society structured by power relations with a hegemonic masculinity at the pinnacle generates a “patriarchal dividend” for all those who benefit without necessarily enacting the hegemonic masculinity (Connell 1995: 82). Many soldiers enact what Connell terms “complicit masculinity,” which enables them to benefit from the patriarchal dividend, even though they might not think of themselves as exerting power over women and other men. Unless they challenge the gender order, they are complicit (Connell 1995: 79-80).

In some ways, hegemonic masculinity acts as a glue. A shared respect and admiration for the idealized model provides the common ground to mask the differences of class, rank and age (Enloe 1993: 52). At the same time, however, hegemonic masculinity is the result of the power struggles and rivalries between different groups of men and their efforts to prove their masculinity. As such, it would be a mistake “to imagine that because each one of the cogs in the increasingly complex military machine seems to be shaped by notions of masculinity, all the parts automatically work together in smooth precision” (Enloe 1993: 98-99). These power struggles are expressed in gendered – often misogynist – terms, where the threat of being feminised is used to downgrade and police groups of men. Importantly, even when it is groups of men that are being subordinated by being feminised, strategies of feminisation have an impact on women by reinforcing the association of feminised qualities with inferiority. In this way, hegemonic masculinity, as well as always being constructed in relation to subordinated masculinities, is always constructed in relation to women – indeed, it can be understood as “the pattern of practice (i.e. things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue” (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 832).

As well as highlighting the way in which power structures gendered relations between groups of men, in developing a theory of gender, Connell is concerned to broaden the focus out from power to consider the other ways in which gender operates. Focussing solely on power oversimplifies the way that gender structures relations; in order to capture the complexity of gender, we need to accommodate gender patterns that are not inherently unequal (Connell 2002a: 57). She argues that, as well as power, we can see gender at work in three further dimensions: the division of labour, emotional relations and the symbolism of our language, thought and culture. When considering power, it is important to recognise that it can operate both as domination and oppression and in a more Foucauldian sense, more subtly, diffusely and intimately (Connell 2002a: 58-60).¹⁰ The division of labour refers to the way that certain tasks are performed by men and others by women (Connell 2002a: 60-62). Emotional relations are attachments or commitments, which can be positive and negative, sometimes both at once. This area includes sexuality and sexual relations, but is broader, also including emotional relations that may exist in the workplace, society or, more abstractly, towards an idea or nation (Connell 2002a: 62-65). Finally, symbolic relations refer to the operation of masculinity/femininity as a powerful symbolic dichotomy:

Whenever we speak of ‘a woman’ or ‘a man’, we call into play a tremendous system of understandings, implications, overtones and allusions that have accumulated through our cultural history. The ‘meanings’ of these words are enormously greater than the biological categories of male and female (Connell 2002a: 65).

It has been argued that Connell’s structures are inconsistent, as power is ubiquitous – not a structure equivalent to something like the division of labour (Hooper 2000: 57). However, Connell makes it clear that the separation of the four dimensions is artificial, suggested in order to highlight their different logics, but that they are all interconnected and interrelated (Connell 2002a: 68). It is not that some gender relations are structured by power and others by the division of labour and so on; most relations will involve more than one dimension. For example, a married couple may contain one partner with more power than the other, will almost certainly divide their labour, will by definition have some sort of emotional

¹⁰ Foucault was sceptical of the idea that there exists a unified central agency of power and pointed to the way in which power operates discursively through the ways we talk, write and conceptualise. See, for example Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

attachment to each other, and be in part defined by the symbolic meanings of the terms husband and wife. In what follows, I demonstrate the interrelations between the different dimensions as they are played out in the British Army. As well as aiming to continue to build a picture of military masculinities in the British Army, this section aims to demonstrate the utility of Connell's framework as a means of capturing the complexity of gender regimes whilst remaining alert to power. It is the focus on power, and how it is vested in the hegemonic form of masculinity, the combat model, which enables us to make sense of anti-militarist feminist claims about the mutually reinforcing nature of masculinities and militarism; but it is the openness to relations other than power which enables to theorise change.

Power

Accounts of British military life demonstrate how power-struggles between groups of men are carried out using strategies of feminisation. As we have seen, British Army training, arguably one of the strongest influences over the construction of a young soldier's masculinity, uses the denigration of all things feminine in order to motivate soldiers. Many accounts of military life suggest that this continues throughout a soldier's career, taking, as Connell's discussion of power suggests, both the form of overt domination and more discursive modes. The latter can be seen in the way that feminisation is used to position different Army specialisations – usually those associated with combat – above others. For example, Tim Collins, a company commander in Iraq, on finding his company jumpy as they are about to set off, shouts to his subalterns: "You are to tell your men to stop acting like women. If they want to join the [battle group who will remain nameless] then fucking go..." (Collins 2005: 135). Behaviour which is seen as anything other than resolute and courageous in the face of war is linked to women and femininity. Similarly, Hockey recounts an instructor's response to an infantryman who refused to share his cigarette: "Don't be such a wanker! Pass that fag around your mates rapid! If you keep on acting like that, you can go and join the girls and fairies in the signals or the engineers or some other dipstick [useless] lot, because we don't want you!" (Hockey 2003: 19). Not sharing becomes weak, feminine conduct, not appropriate for infantrymen, who claim to be most masculine as they are the ones involved in combat.

Examples such as this, where selfishness becomes feminine, demonstrate the fluidity of gender, echoing the examples above where obedience, subservience, attention to dress detail,

tears and emotion become masculine. As Hooper suggests, it is often not actions themselves that are gendered, but the interpretations placed on them which determine whether practices are masculine or feminine (Hooper 2000: 47-8). In the Army, men get rewarded for obedience and it thereby becomes a valorised practice, reinforcing the association between masculinity and power. Although this does not appear to be what is happening in the case of tears and compassion, where it is perhaps more a case of special behaviour which is tolerated so long as it is contained (Hockey 2003: 23; Morgan 1994: 177), feminist research has exposed that the fluidity of gender generally benefits men, as whatever is designated masculine is simultaneously privileged and vice versa (Hooper 2000: 47-48).

The accounts of British Army life suggest that a British soldier who overplays the masculine culture might become the object of some contempt because, as Morgan puts it, “there is some degree of awareness that a masculine culture is being created, some possibility for ironic role distance, some room for manoeuvre and negotiation” (Morgan 1994: 178). At the same time, there is a strong pressure on men to develop the hard style, to be able to swear, hold one's drink, and display a sexual knowingness (Morgan 1994: 178; also see Hockey 2003; Hynes 1998; McManners 1993). This is how hegemonic masculinity operates; there are rewards for enacting the masculinity closest to the hegemonic model, and sanctions if you do not, but these operate in subtle ways, not as the master plan of military elites or some sort of “patriarchy central” (Connell 1995).

The operation of more overt forms of power are evident, however, seen in the bullying scandals – both of recruits at home and prisoners in Iraq – which have rocked the British Army in recent years, where incidents of harassment and violence often involve the use of sexual poses and threats in order to feminise the Other (Bourke 2005; Branigan 2004; Burke 2003). The prevalence of bullying and sexual harassment casts doubt over the military's usual defence – that bullying is the work of “a few bad apples” – and indicates that soldiers need to use violence to demonstrate and convince themselves of their superior masculinity. The wider consequences of these strategies of feminisation, highlighted in the anti-militarist feminist literature, such as increased levels of domestic violence, sexual harassment and involvement in prostitution and rape overseas are also evident in the British case (BBC News Online 2003; Maley 2006). McManners offers some suggestions as to how the strategies of Othering used in training make battlefield rape more likely:

In a battlefield rape, a soldier reaffirms his maleness in the most undeniable fashion. Because his masculinity has been made integral to and dependent upon his ability as a soldier, for a frightened, frustrated, and inadequate individual, performing a rape must seem to improve (or at least reaffirm) him as a soldier (McManners 1993: 115)

McManners indicates his disapproval of rape, but at the same time implies that it is an almost inevitable result of British military training. The power-struggles amongst men with the British Army, because they are conducted through strategies of feminization, thus have direct consequences for women. Before discussing further the implications of the model of masculinity which appears to be hegemonic in the British Army, however, the other dimensions of gender need to be explored. As Connell suggests, power is not the only dimension or dynamic at work structuring gender relations in the British Army.

Division of Labour

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the gendered associations of war and soldiering have been, at least until very recently, “one of the most abiding features of the sexual division of labour in western societies” (Morgan 1994: 166). The UK is no exception to this phenomenon: men are expected to be fighters, while women, if no longer formally excluded from the British Army, are still a minority within it and, crucially, excluded from combat positions (Ministry of Defence 2007).¹¹ Historically, women in the British Army were limited to non-combat and support roles in both world wars and if women wanted to take up arms this had to be in disguise as a man. The contribution made by women in the two world wars brought about a gradual relaxation of their official exclusion, and with the disbanding of women’s units in the 1980s, women moved into a wider variety of jobs within the British forces (Adie 2003; Muir 1993; Woodward and Winter 2004: 281). Since the radical changes to the structure and scale of the British Armed Forces resulting from the end of the Cold War, there have been increased efforts to boost the number of women and ethnic minorities, in response to recruitment problems and the Ministry of Defence’s desire to project an image of modern, equal opportunity armed forces (Dandeker and Segal 1996; Muir 1993;

¹¹ The Ministry of Defence website states that “Women serve in all specialisations, except those where the primary duty is “to close with and kill the enemy.” Women are, therefore, excluded from the Royal Marines General Service (as Royal Marine Commandos), the Household Cavalry and Royal Armoured Corps, the Infantry and the Royal Air Force Regiment. The exclusion does not, however,

Woodward and Winter 2004). As with the experience across western militaries, however, these moves have been resisted in the UK, both from within military circles and the wider public, with the debate revolving around concerns about the extent to which feminine skills for caring and nurturing will be diminished; the extent to which women will be able to cope with the rigors and deprivations of war; whether men will obey women officers; and whether men will endanger themselves by protecting women in combat situations (Morgan 1994: 171; Muir 1993). A commonly held view amongst military personnel is that increasing the number of women is “political correctness gone mad” which will compromise the military’s fighting abilities (see for example Anderson 2000; Muir 1993; Woodward and Winter 2002: 11). As Rear-Admiral Sir Morgan Morgan-Giles told the Sunday Times in 1990: “Women’s eternal role is to create life and nurture it; a fighting man must be prepared to kill. Women do wonderful things for men, but combat duty to defend us should not be one of them” (cited in Muir 1993).

The situation in the UK differs from that of other western nations in some ways, however, with some suggesting that there is not the same debate in the UK as there is in the US regarding the inclusion of women leading to the feminization or emasculation of the military (Woodward and Winter 2004: 295). Brown notes that in the US, the fear is that the military is too soft to attract young men, whereas, in the UK, young men are more likely to be feared to be too soft for the military, with attention focused on the problems with today’s youth being “couch potatoes” (Brown 2002). Woodward and Winter argue that women are represented in two ways in British Army discourse – as “tomboys or incomplete men”, and as “(sexualised) disruptive” (Woodward and Winter 2002). As tomboys, they can be included insofar as they can be like men, a position which is problematic in that it ignores and trivialises the structural causes of difference and disadvantage. Even more problematic, however, is women’s representation as disruptive, where their inclusion is resisted not on scientific evidence but due to the “deep symbolic importance of the figure of the (infantry) soldier as exclusively male,” suggesting that “the full participation of women constitutes the breach of a boundary which marks out the Army as a masculine preserve” (Woodward and Winter 2002: 3; 2004: 289-293). Both Higate (2003a: 203) and Morgan (Morgan 1994: 171) reach a similar conclusion, suggesting that even in the UK, where the debate over women’s

prevent them serving on the establishment of (i.e. as part of) such units in administrative and support

inclusion does appear to be slightly more nuanced than in, for example, the US, it remains important to preserve the association of masculinity and combat.

It is thus already evident that the dimensions of gender highlighted by Connell overlap and interact. As it is combat soldiers who are more likely to rise to positions of seniority in the Armed Forces, it is the continuing commitment to restrict combat positions to men (division of labour) which ensures the continuing privileging of masculinity and men (power). Furthermore, restricting combat positions to men simultaneously draws on and reinforces the gendered dichotomy of the Just Warrior and the Beautiful Soul – the discourse that men must fight to protect their vulnerable womenfolk back home (symbolic).

Emotional Relations¹²

In introducing the dimension of emotional relations, Connell aims to draw attention to the significance of the whole range – not just romantic – of emotional relations both between and within the genders, and the way in which such relations are not exclusively positive or negative but ambivalent and contradictory. Indeed, as Enloe has detailed, the emotional relations between soldiers and women are nothing if not contradictory: women come into soldiers' lives in a variety of ways; they are mothers, wives, girlfriends and daughters on the home front; they are colleagues, in increasing numbers; they are other actors in a war setting, such as nurses, aid workers, politicians and journalists. Enloe argues that the many things that militaries want from women are incompatible – arguing that women are supposed to be at the rear to be protected but also at the front to nurse the wounded; that nurses are supposed to care, but also to send men back to the front as soon as possible; that women soldiers are supposed to be brave and adventurous, but to remain feminine enough to protect soldiers' masculine self-confidence (Enloe 1983: 212). Whether these contradictions will expose the weakness of the military as an institution as Enloe predicts is not so clear, but certainly, soldiers' relationships with these various Others differ, influencing the negotiation of their masculinity.

roles.” See <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/WomenInTheArmedForces.htm>

¹² This dimension was referred to as “cathexis” in Connell’s earlier work, but by 2002’s *Gender* had become this rather less obscure term.

What is perhaps most striking when we consider the sphere of emotional relations and British soldiers is the compulsory heterosexuality, both in the formal sense – homosexuality was illegal in the UK Armed Forces until 2000 – and informal – despite this formal change, homosexuality is far from universally accepted in military culture. The MoD's guidelines on gays in the military had claimed "homosexual behavior can cause offense, polarize relationships, induce ill discipline and, as a consequence, damage morale and unit effectiveness" (Lyall 2001). The only appropriate masculinity was heterosexual. Indeed, the informal culture of the British Army has long revolved around constructions of heterosexuality. Morgan notes that "British National Servicemen were quickly introduced to the rumour that "they" put bromide in your tea in order to reduce sexual desires and learned that their beds were known as "wanking chariots,"" and that "ubiquitous pinups" established "direct links between the bodies of women and the bodily needs of men" (Morgan 1994: 167). Morgan acknowledges that actual homosexual relationships were often tolerated (Morgan 1994: 168), but at the more overt level, a heterosexist culture existed which generated homophobia with references to queers and "arse bandits" and warnings about not bending over in the presence of those whose heterosexual masculinity might be in question" (Morgan 1994: 167). Hockey's notes suggest that in the British Army, *being* heterosexual is not enough: it must be vigorously enacted. In his training, "the infantry role was explicitly portrayed to recruits as one that demanded heterosexual potency. "Real men" chase women, and "real men" should be sexually athletic at every available opportunity" (Hockey 2003: 18). When given time off, the narrative of "birds, booze and brawling" took over: "'Real men" drink, and they drink hard, not merely as compensation for recent deprivation but because this is what "real men" naturally do" (Hockey 2003: 23). This suggests that heterosexuality needs to be explicitly celebrated so as to avoid any risk of the close "homosocial" bonds, common to male-dominated institutions such as the military, being misinterpreted as homosexuality.

Again, it is clear that the structure of emotional relations interrelates with that of the other dimensions of gender in Connell's framework. Heterosexuality (emotional) is a crucial aspect of hegemonic masculinity (power): even though the British government rescinded its ban on gays in the military in January 2000, this does not mean homosexuality has become a celebrated or respected way of being a soldier (Higate 2003a: 209). Cultures tend not to change that quickly, and "gay" and "poof" remain derogatory terms used to motivate soldiers to become "real men." Similarly, soldiers' emotional relations with women will depend on

what she does (division of labour) – whether she is wife, nurse or colleague, for instance – and often involve domination and aggression (power). For example, several accounts note the way in which the all-male bonding or homosociality of the Army relies on the construction of women as the sexualised Other, leading to aggressive heterosexual behaviour:

[T]here is no doubt that military life provides not only many of the resources out of which misogynies are constructed (group solidarities, all-male bondings, a relatively limited age range, a cult of hardness and actual physical deprivations) but also, from time to time, the opportunity for such misogynies to be given open physical expression without sanction or retribution (Morgan 1994: 177-8; and see Woodward and Winter 2004: 292).

Symbolism

The fourth dimension of gender highlighted by Connell is the symbolic, which refers to the dichotomous structuring of language and culture highlighted by many feminists. In western language and culture, masculinity is associated with war, strength and images of the protector, and femininity is associated with peace, weakness, and images of vulnerability. The gendered dichotomies which result: war/peace, strong/weak, protector/vulnerable, structure the meaning system which underpins Army culture. As the accounts of the British Army explored so far demonstrate, what makes women's presence so contentious in the British Army is not what they are – their purported essential physiology – but what they represent. The exclusion of women from combat roles is not justified with scientific evidence about stamina or strength, but relies on perception and interpretation, suggesting it is primarily to do with the symbolic importance of the infantry soldier as male (Muir 1993; Woodward and Winter 2004: 289-293). Despite the increase of women in the British Army and their proximity to the front line in recent operations, British popular culture continues to link femininity to home and hearth, with women most visible in their roles as sweethearts, victims and the protected (Roberts 2003).

It is because of this symbolic dimension that constructions of masculinity in the military have currency beyond their context. In cultures where military myth and reality play a significant role in national pride, as they have done in the UK (Muir 1993: 17), constructions of masculinity and femininity in a military context shape the whole order of gender relations (Morgan 1994: 170). Connell comments of the military that “no other arena has been more

important for the definition of hegemonic masculinity in European/American culture" (Connell 1995: 213). The idea that men take life while women give it is not just relevant in a military context but can be seen as underpinning the entire ideology of gender difference (Segal 1987).

The “Combat Model” as Hegemonic Masculinity

Connell’s framework of gender relations has enabled the exploration of British Army masculinities in all their complexity and contradiction. This is important because it avoids an analysis which is focused solely on power. Power and masculinity are so closely intertwined that there is always a risk of collapsing masculinity into power, and not remaining alert to the variety of ways in which gender structures relations. It is important not to close off the option of gender relations governed by dynamics other than power if we are going to be able to theorise about change, a point which will be returned to in subsequent chapters. Nonetheless, in the context of the British Army, it appears as if all four dimensions interact to construct a hegemonic masculinity associated with the practices, skills, and symbolic importance of combat – the “combat model.” Although masculinities are multiple, contradictory, fluid and dynamic, the practices and ideals of strength, toughness, fitness, a readiness for action, domination, courage, risk-taking, a sense of invulnerability, rationality, heterosexuality and hard-drinking form the hegemonic masculinity in the British Army; or, to put it more succinctly, a model which is: “physically fit, mentally brave, emotionally hard” (Woodward 1998: 287). This model “eclipses the range of masculinities which can be found in a military setting” (Higate 2003c: 27-28). In order for soldiers to be effective on PSOs, not only is there a need for alternative constructions of military masculinity in the British Army, but arguably they need to challenge the hegemony of this combat masculinity. There are already many military masculinities, but it is the dominance of the combat model which is problematic.

Conclusion

To sum up the argument so far, the mutually reinforcing dynamic of masculinity and militarism makes it hard to challenge militarism and war. Moreover, the disparaging of all things feminine and the aggressive heterosexuality encouraged in training can hardly be ignored when considering the prevalence of rape as a weapon of war, and other issues of sexual exploitation and torture carried out by soldiers. Anti-militarist feminist arguments are

crucial for understanding the role masculinity plays in war, militarism, violence and exploitation. The other aspect of military masculinities that is undeniable, however, is the multiplicity, dynamism and contradiction which exist as a result of various factors: the agency of individual soldiers, the intersection of gender with race, class, rank and job specification, and the complexities and challenges of the operational environment. Military masculinity is not unitary, nor imposed from above. Paying attention to the way in which gender structures relations – and in particular the concept of hegemonic masculinity – helps us make sense of this. We can use Connell’s framework to reconcile the multiplicity and contradictoriness of military masculinities with a research agenda which recognises the importance of military masculinities as a relevant and useful concept to the study of war and peace. An exploration of British Army masculinities, using Connell’s framework, demonstrated that a particular model – associated with combat – is hegemonic. In order for peacekeeping operations to bring about a meaningful peace – one which includes gender equality – it is this model which must be challenged. Before going on to explore the extent of this challenge, the methodology of the research needs clarification, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Exploring Military Masculinities – A Feminist Discourse Analysis

This chapter discusses the theoretical and methodological issues involved in this research. The first section highlights the key points of the theoretical perspective on gender and issues of security developed so far, picking up on the points made in the introduction and the end of the second chapter about the potential fruitful compatibility of anti-militarist feminism and Critical Security Studies. The second section discusses and justifies the methodological perspective adopted in order to translate this theoretical perspective into empirical research, which builds on both Lene Hansen's poststructuralist discourse theory and Charlotte Hooper's textual analysis. The third discusses the actual sources of British Army discourse which were analysed, and deals with the thorny issues of validity, reliability and generalizability.

I: Theoretical Approach: Feminist Social Constructivism

The first three chapters have already gone some way to outlining the theoretical perspective of this thesis. In particular, in terms of the approach to gender, Connell's understanding of gender as body-reflexive practice and framework for analysing gender relations have been both introduced and used to explore the case of military masculinities in the context of the British Army. In terms of the theoretical approach to IR, the main academic approaches have been reviewed, and it has been suggested that a feminist perspective shares many of the concerns of Critical Security Studies, and that there is potential for fruitful cross-fertilisation of the two perspectives. The aim of this section is to summarise the key points of these arguments, clarifying where this thesis is situated in terms of theoretical perspectives on both gender and security issues, in order to go on and explain the methodological choices made to carry out the research.

The perspective adopted takes both gender and security to be phenomena which are socially constructed. It is also a theoretical position which is explicitly feminist, in that it understands the symbolic structure of gender as being crucial in understanding issues of security: war, militarism and peace; however, as the previous two chapters have argued, it is

more alert to agency than some anti-militarist feminist positions. Crucially, it is a perspective which sees progressive politics as possible, in contrast to some postmodern or poststructuralist perspectives on gender, which are sceptical of emancipatory agendas.¹³ Many postmodernists view emancipation projects as too close to old totalizing ideologies such as socialism which purported to be progressive but which, in practice, produced little of consequence or resulted in oppression (Steans 2006: 146). The position adopted here, however, is that it is possible to adopt many of the important insights of poststructuralist thought, and still further our understanding of injustice and inequality, and indeed, challenge them. The following sections go on to clarify these statements.

The Social Construction of Gender

The idea of gender as socially constructed, as achieved through practice in response to both physical embodiment and social structures, avoids the risk of biological determinism and essentialism, the ideas that gender is determined by anatomical or physiological make-up. It avoids the dangers of speaking of “men” and “women” as if they have some unchanging, inherent essence. A social constructivist approach brings in a focus on gender as a system of meaning – the symbolic dimension of gender. This symbolic aspect of gender has been particularly highlighted by poststructuralist feminists (Connell 2002a: 73), and is important because it is the reason that military masculinities have significance beyond the immediate context. Due to gender’s role in structuring our language and thought, its effects go beyond the meanings ascribed to male and female bodies, and the concomitant ways that power is (unequally) distributed amongst men and women; indeed, ideas about gender shape and sustain our ideas and our practices in all realms of social life (Cohn, Hill, and Ruddick 2005).

A social constructivist framework such as Connell’s, however, retains a focus on the body that some postmodern feminists risk neglecting. Some postmodernists argue that it is possible to define masculinity and femininity without a material referent at all, but in relation only to one another (Squires 1999: 62). In this view, femininity and masculinity have no

¹³ Although many distinguish between the terms poststructuralism and postmodernism, seeing poststructuralism as having roots in poststructuralist linguistics, philosophy, social theory, literary theory and postmodernism referring to a particular historical order (Hansen 2006: 4) here they are used interchangeably, as in Zalewski (2000) as ways to refer to a loosely affiliated though internally diverse body of thought that has common epistemological and ontological roots.

ontological foundation – they are relational and contextual. Judith Butler is the most famous advocate of this position:

Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pre-given sex; gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which ‘sexed nature’ or ‘a natural sex’ is produced and established (Butler 1990 1-25).

By contrast, Connell argues that although gender is indeed a social structure, it is a social structure of a particular kind because it involves a specific relationship with bodies (Connell 2002a: 10). She argues that some postmodern approaches exaggerate the docility of bodies with their arguments that gendered bodies are the result of disciplinary practices:

Bodies cannot be understood as just the objects of social process, whether symbolic or disciplinary. They are active participants in social process. They participate through their capacities, development and needs, through the friction of their recalcitrance, and through the directions set by their pleasures and skills (Connell 2002a: 38).

Connell advocates a conceptualisation of gender which takes into account the fact that “bodies are addressed by social processes and drawn into history without ceasing to be bodies – their materiality continues to matter” (Connell 2002a: 48). The importance of this “body-reflexive practice” was evident in our discussion of military masculinities in the British Army in the previous chapter.

Understanding gender as socially constructed also emphasises the possibility of change in gender meanings and relations, but without implying, as postmodernists tend to do, “generalized instability” or an infinite fluidity (Connell 2002a: 71). As Connell argues, “The post-structuralist approach is helpful in emphasizing that identities are always historically constructed and in principle open to change; but we need a more specific theory to understand how change occurs” (Connell 2002a: 71). Otherwise, the emphasis on gender as having no stable content tends to slip into conflating gender with power in ways which close

off opportunities for change – as seen in theories which define gender *as* domination and oppression (see for example Butler 1990; Delphy and Leonard 1992).

Connell's suggestion of the concept of "crisis tendencies" does not necessarily fare much better, however, in terms of offering a more specific theory of how change occurs (see Connell 1995: 84-6; 2002a: 71). She writes that the concept "allows us to distinguish periods when pressures for change are well controlled, or are gradually building, from periods when crisis tendencies erupt into actual crisis and force rapid change" (Connell 2002a: 71). Yet it is not clear how the concept does this, or how such distinctions, if possible to make, will help us identify and encourage change. Nonetheless, it is the combination of the insights of poststructuralism into the dynamic, fluid, and relational nature of gender and the retention of a focus on the physical embodiment and material aspects of gender that make a social constructivist understanding of gender such as Connell's so useful.

The Social Construction of Security

The first thing to address here is that the term "social constructivist" is used slightly differently in the gender and IR literatures. Whilst social constructivist gender theorists such as Connell understand gender as relational, as constructed through interactions, scholars termed social constructivists in IR, such as Alexander Wendt, tend to see identity slightly differently, as something that can be pre-social and intrinsic (Hansen 2006: 24). This thesis understands identity as relationally constructed, but adopts the term social constructivist in order to distinguish the theoretical perspective within from postmodern or poststructuralist perspectives on gender, so as to retain the focus on the possibility of progressive politics. In IR terminology, this is a poststructuralist, Reflectivist or Critical Security Studies situated thesis; the key point is that security is understood, like gender, to be socially constructed.

A Critical Security Studies perspective on security, as outlined in the second chapter, focuses on how threats are constructed, and how some are made to seem more important than others (see for example Booth 2004; Buzan, Waever, and De Wilde 1998; Krause and Williams 1997). Although gender is not often central to Critical Security Studies scholars' agendas, their epistemological and ontological assumptions are shared with social constructivist feminist approaches (see for example Ackerly, Stern, and True 2006). Understanding security as socially constructed is quite different from conceptualising security as objectively

existing in the ‘real world’ and has several advantages. Firstly, it enables us to focus on how political practices individualize certain threats, thereby locating them outside the public, political realm, while others become visible as collective concerns, an issue of particular concern to feminists as it is often the security threats faced by women which are individualised and thus silenced (Hansen 2000; 2006: 36). Secondly, it enables a focus on how gender as a system of meaning is used in security discourses in order to construct some threats as more serious than others – and how, in this process, this reinforces the same hierarchical gendered dichotomies (Cohn and Ruddick 2002; True 2001: 263). This was seen in the second chapter in the discussion of national security discourses and the way in which a risk of feminization prevents certain issues and solutions coming to the table (Enloe 2007: 40; Tickner 2001). Thirdly, it enables us to conceptualise security as a process, partial and elusive, involving struggle and contestation, involving its subjects as agents in its provision – a conceptualisation that feminists have highlighted as being useful in terms of understanding and achieving security for women (Steans 2006; Sylvester 1994; Young 2003). Finally, as with social constructivist approaches to gender, conceptualising security as socially constructed is important because it emphasises the possibility of change, agency and emancipation. Just as gender inequality is not inevitable, war and security are not endemic; just as it is possible to achieve more equitable and democratic gender relations, it is possible to achieve peace and security.

II: Methodology: Discourse Theory

The social constructivist approach to gender and to IR outlined above makes discourse theory an appropriate methodology to use to translate the theoretical perspective into analysis. As linguistic practices are centrally involved in structuring identities (Hansen 2006: 19), a discursive approach is particularly suitable for the investigation of the dynamics of masculinity construction. A discursive approach enables us to highlight how the symbolic dimension functions in the construction of gender and the shaping of gender relations. This section aims to expand on these points and to demonstrate how discourse theory is appropriate for this thesis.

There are of course many types of discourse theory and analysis. The approach adopted in this thesis builds on two, unrelated studies: Charlotte Hooper’s *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations and Gender Politics* (Hooper 2000) and Lene Hansen’s *Security as*

Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War (Hansen 2006). Hooper undertakes a textual analysis of *The Economist* magazine, in order to map the interplay between different varieties of hegemonic masculinity and explore their relationship to international relations. As the remainder of this chapter will demonstrate, there are several ways in which her study is useful in terms of developing a methodological approach to the study of military masculinities, including in particular her strategy of reading texts in order to explore the construction of masculinities and her use of the concepts of feminisation and masculinisation. Hansen develops a poststructuralist discourse theory and methodology and uses it to analyse the Western response to the war in Bosnia. Her approach is particularly useful for this thesis because of its focus on identity construction through two related concepts: linking and differentiation and the possibility of degrees of difference between Self and Other, ranging from the radically different to the familiar. Indeed, this thesis can be seen as applying the insights of Hansen into the identity construction of states to the identity construction of gender. Again, these points will be expanded upon and clarified in the remainder of this chapter.¹⁴

The starting point of most forms of discourse theory is that our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations, but, rather, play an active role in creating and changing them (Phillips and Jorgensen 2002: 1). In other words, language does not reflect an already existing social reality but constitutes that reality for us (Zalewski 2000: 25). Discourse theorists argue that meaning is conferred by the way language is structured into systems of significant differences. To exemplify, Howarth suggests considering how a forest standing in the path of a proposed motorway may represent an inconvenient obstacle impeding the rapid implementation of a new road system, a site of special interest for scientists and naturalists, or a symbol of the nation's threatened natural heritage. "In short, the meaning of 'being' of the forest – what it literally is for us – depends on the particular systems of difference or discourses that constitute its identity" (Howarth 2000: 102).

¹⁴ Hansen uses term "poststructuralist," but, as outlined above, to use poststructuralist in relation to gender involves aligning oneself with those who are sceptical about emancipatory agendas, and this thesis is committed to the belief that a progressive politics is possible. As such, I use the term social constructivist, but define it in such a way that it captures the significant points of what Hansen means by post-structuralism: the idea that identity is relational, political, discursive and social.

Discourse theory builds on the work of structuralist linguistics, particularly that of Saussure, who argued that language is a system of signs, and that meaning is established not by the essence of a thing itself but through a series of juxtapositions, where one element is valued over its opposite (Saussure [1916] 1974). Discourse theorists thus maintain that language finds its meanings in structure not in substance. Feminists, as we have seen, point specifically to the gendered nature of this structure. The privileged term of any pair within the linguistic system is associated with masculinity; and as masculinity is valued, femininity becomes the 'Other', and is devalued. The result is the gendered dichotomies: strong/weak, rational/irrational, prudent/impulsive, and so on, which have been so important in structuring our ideas about war, militarism and peace. Whereas our common sense understanding of language conceptualises it as a tool to describe things or to distinguish one term from another, Zalewski points out that language is "not a neutral transmitter of meaning," but rather is "infused with power and in part provides the meaning for the term" (Zalewski 2000: 56).

Discourse and the Material World

Discourse theorists often face the criticism of neglecting the material, the 'real world' 'out there'; of being unable to shed any light on those relations which exist irrespective of language. The charge, in relation to this research, would be that discourse relates to the way that gender structures our language, the symbolic dimension of Connell's framework, but has little to offer when it comes to the more material aspects of gender relations, such as the division of labour and its associated disparities in income. Discourse theorists firmly reject this charge, maintaining that discourse theory enables researchers to study all aspects of society including material relations. Hansen argues that "the point is not to disregard material facts but to study how these are produced and prioritized" (Hansen 2006: 22). She draws on Laclau and Mouffe who argue that their point is not to deny that objects exist outside of discourse, but to deny that objects have *meaning* outside of discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 108). They deny or aim to blur the sharp separation between an objective world on the one hand and language and thought on the other, introducing a new 'radical materialism' as way out of this realist/idealist debate (Howarth 2000: 112; Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 108). For Hansen, discourse theory does not privilege language and ideas as explanatory factors so much as highlight their mutually constitutive relationship with materiality:

The analytical intent is not to measure the relative importance of ideas and materiality but to understand them both as constructed through a discourse which gives materiality meaning by drawing on a particular set of identity constructions (Hansen 2006: 23).

As such, not only is it appropriate to explore material relations using discourse theory, it is essential; because material relations are discursively produced, attention to language is vital for understanding their full significance. For example, critics may argue that as gender is intimately connected to the body, which could hardly be more material, gender cannot be comprehensively researched using discourse theory. The social constructivist approach to gender adopted here, however, whilst allowing for an extra-discursive reality of basic autonomy, suggests that the *meaning* – the weight and significance attached to the body – is always discursively constituted (Acker 1992: 566; Hooper 2000: 34). Thus discourse theory has much to say about gender, bodies and all. In terms of this research, it is not just what might happen between a British soldier and a local commander on PSO which is important in the construction of the British soldier's masculinity; how they both interpret the interaction and how the soldier chooses to retell the story are equally important because it is this understanding that in part *constitutes the actual interaction*. As with Howarth's example of the forest, where the meaning of the forest, "what it literally is for us," depends on the discourses that constitute its identity, the meaning of the soldier's masculinity depends too on discourse.

Linking and Differentiation

Discourse theory highlights that meaning is assigned to things not just through a series of juxtapositions or dichotomies, but through a more complex process of linking and differentiation. Hansen exemplifies this process by demonstrating how a term such as 'woman' is defined through a positive process of linking emotional, motherly, reliant and simple, with this female series of links as at the same time juxtaposed to the male series of links (rational, intellectual, independent, complex) through a negative process of differentiation (Hansen 2006: 19).

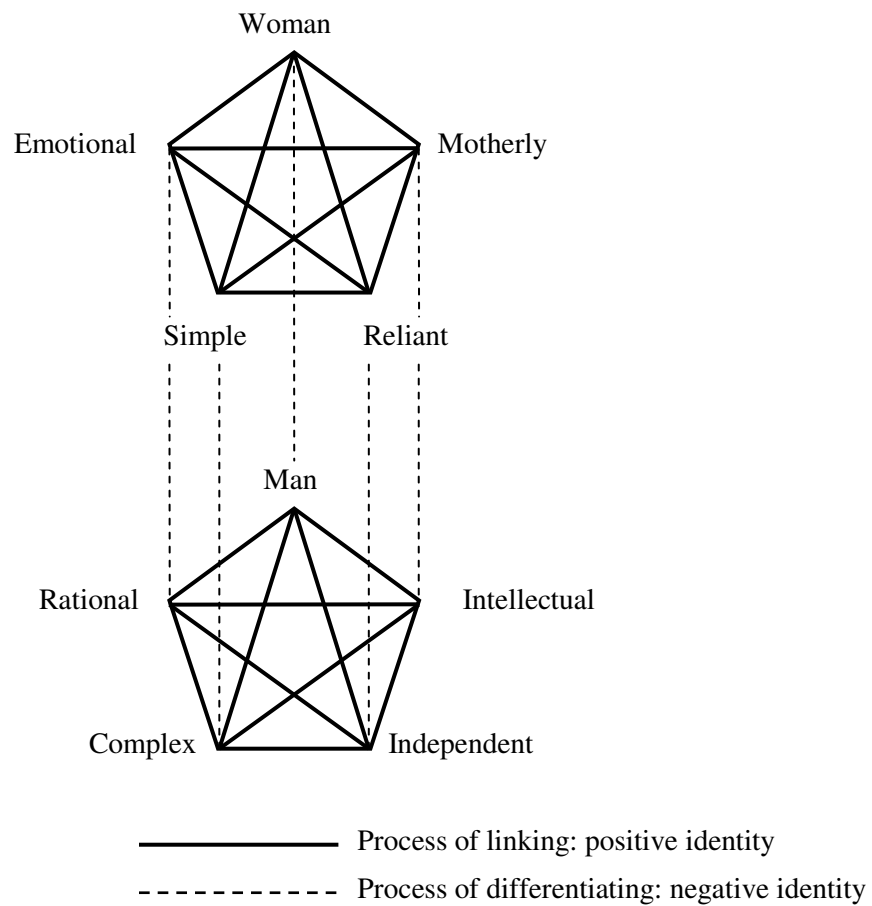


Figure 4.1 Linking and Differentiation, from Hansen (2006: 20)

As Hansen points out, it is this more complicated structure that demonstrates the power of discourses. To construct masculinity as different to femininity does not create much meaning unless the terms are situated in a discourse which links and differentiates a whole range of signs (Connell 1995: 71; Hansen 2006: 43). As situated in this web of meaning, a single word is able to conjure up and reinforce an image of male or female which is instantly recognisable and pervasive.

Fluidity of Discourse

At the same time, an important aspect of Hansen's discourse theory, indicated by the "post" in "poststructuralist", emphasises that the structures of language are inherently unstable. In contrast to the structuralist linguistics of Sausurre, in post-structuralist discourse theory the fixation of meaning is always only partial because of "constant overflowing of every discourse by the infinitude of the field of discursivity" (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 113). Discourses will always try and construct themselves as stable, but there will always be slips and instabilities (Hansen 2006: 20-1; Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 111):

Seeing identity as built through processes of linking and differentiation shows the possibility for destabilization: the link between some of the positive signs might become unstable; or a negatively valued term of one discourse might be constructed as positive within another discourse, making the clear attribution of inferior or superior value to signs more complicated (Hansen 2006: 21).

Although the fluidity of discourse is important, only the most extreme poststructuralist would claim that the fluidity is infinite. The aim of hegemonic projects is to try and stabilize systems of meaning, around the articulation of what Laclau and Mouffe call "nodal points" which underpin and organize social orders (Laclau and Mouffe 1985: 142). These projects are rarely fully successful, however, and there is much room for individual agency to challenge the fixity of meaning by constructing new nodal points. "As language is an inherently unstable system of signs, a political project which is contestable and subjective, attempts to fix gender order are never fully successful" (Hooper 2000: 45).

For example, we have noted the way that, although arbitrary, gender dichotomies are naturalized and so, over time, appear as absolutes, qualities which are and always have been naturally male or female. The result is common sense accounts of the enduring difference between men and women: men are from Mars, women are from Venus. Gender dichotomies thus both obscure the complexity of the many and varied differences which exist between men and women and act to produce and reproduce some very real gender differences and inequalities (Hooper 2000: 45). The focus on the instability of discourse challenges these processes of naturalisation or "sedimentation." It advocates a strategy of deconstruction, in

other words, de-naturalising the dichotomies that have become naturalised (Zalewski 2000: 56). The issue of the importance of deconstructing dichotomies as a feminist project will be returned to at length in chapter eight.

Intersections of Gender with Race, Class and Sexuality

Gender dichotomies are a particularly pervasive and powerful system of meaning because of the ways in which their representations permeate society. “In the cultures we live in, a huge amount of unremitting work, in the home, at school, in the marketing departments of companies producing shampoo and automobiles, is invested in producing women and men in a particular mould: as complementary, two halves of a couple, rather than as similar” (Cockburn 2003). At the same time, gender is not the only aspect of identity which is structured in this relational way. Sexuality, ethnicity, race and class can also be structured through linkages and differentiations, and discourse analyses need to remain alert to the ways in which social divisions are interlaced with each other.

While this study is primarily focused on individual identities – the masculinities of soldiers – the identity of collectivities such as the state are also constructed relationally. Indeed, Connolly suggests that the process of state identity construction in relation to the Other derives from experiences at the individual level, the human experience of suffering and unfairness and the ensuing need to locate someone responsible (Connolly 1991). The two levels often interact; as we shall see, the construction of individual peacekeeper masculinities is connected to the construction of western states and the ‘international community’ – both are positioned as altruistic, masculine protectors in certain discourses surrounding peacekeeping.

Interpretative Strategy

How can we apply this to researching military masculinities of British soldiers on PSOs? The focus on linkages and differentiations provides us with a starting point for a research reading strategy (Hansen 2006: 41):

The process of linking and differentiation provide theoretical concepts and methodological tools for conducting empirical analysis and they allow for a structured and systematic analysis of:

how discourses seek to construct stability, when they become unstable, how they can be deconstructed, and the processes through which they change (Hansen 2006: 44).¹⁵

In this strategy, Hansen recommends one begins by identifying terms which indicate a clear construction of the Other. For George W Bush talking about Saddam Hussein, Hansen suggests, the indicators were clear: evil, dictator, murderer, terrorist, contrasted with the terms used in association with the US: good, civilised, justified, attacked (Hansen 2006: 41-2). Of course, as Hansen points out, there is rarely an explicit web of signs in texts, jumping out of the page. For example, when signifying the Other, texts are not always explicit about the Self. Often this is because it is assumed to be obvious or because the discourse is well established (Hansen 2006: 44). One could argue, for instance, that the hegemonic military masculinity outlined in the previous two chapters is so well established in military discourse, through decades of military culture, films, novels and autobiographies that it is rarely explicitly referred to in the texts. A degree of interpretation is required, along with a need to be alert, flexible and to “deconstruct the silences” in the texts in order to uncover the identities under construction (Kronsell 2006; Ridderhoff 2002). Moreover, as we have noted, identity construction is not accomplished solely through designation of one particular sign for Other or Self but rather through the location of this sign within a larger system. As such, any number of terms might be included in this web of signs, so that masculinity, for instance, might be linked to people, practices, or things.

When researching masculinities, the obvious Other to look for is women, whether that be women in the home front, women soldiers, or other women in the PSO environment. As Enloe writes:

To explore the complexities of masculinity in the history of the Cold War calls for more than curiosity about men. It requires curiosity about women as well. For masculinity is constructed out of ideas about femininity, its alleged opposite. Men in real life learn about and accept or resist their culture's ideas about what is natural in male behaviour by relying on (while still controlling) women, by fantasizing about women, and by working to separate

¹⁵ Hansen uses the term “reading strategy” because she analyses textual sources, but the same ideas about looking for linking and differentiation can be used to analyse a variety of sources in a broader “interpretation strategy”.

themselves from women. Where are the women? This is a question that can reveal the major players in the creation and perpetuation of the Cold War to be more than merely idiosyncratic heroes or villains, more than just personifications of their bureaucratic posts. It is a question that reminds us that the people on the podium or around the conference table are not women. It is a question that makes us see men as people who have been socialized – not always successfully – into particular gender assumptions and who have had bestowed on them distinct privileges, authorities and limitations (Enloe 1993: 19-20).

This call to pay attention to women in order to research masculinities is perhaps particularly relevant when researching almost entirely male dominated institutions such as the military. As the norms of the institution are literally embodied by these men, female bodies are a very tangible challenge to hegemonic masculinity; focusing on women's presence thus makes the norms of hegemonic masculinity more visible (Kronsell 2006).

However, Hansen points to the importance of developing an analytical perspective through which the empirical complexity of identity construction can be brought out. Identities may always be constructed in relation to Others, but, she argues, Others are not always 'radical Others,' that is Others who are radically different and/or threatening (Hansen 2006: 38-41). More complex and ambiguous differentiations than outright opposition are possible. This means that there is a need to be attentive to constructions of masculinity which are not obviously in opposition to the radical Other, that is, femininity and women. Indeed – as the previous chapter's discussion of multiple masculinities indicates – masculinities are often constructed in relation to the masculinities of other men. Moreover, Connell's framework of gender relations, across the dimensions of power, labour, emotion and symbolism, each with their different logics, reveals the way that masculinities are constructed in relations other than "radical." Emotional relations, for example, involve love and desire as well as hate and fear, and include heterosexual, homosexual and homosocial relations, which implies that masculinities are not constructed simply in relation in terms of opposition to the Other.

It is as important, then, in researching British military masculinities, to be attentive to the relations between British soldiers and other men, and relations with both men and women that seem to encompass other dynamics other than Self-Other. Thinking of femininity as the "radical" Other of masculinity risks fixing the gender order and the privileging of masculinity. As we have seen, the assignments masculinity and femininity are arbitrary,

they are not fixed opposites; gender dichotomies act to obscure the complexity of identity construction. Feminists are at risk of foreclosing possibilities for change in gender relations if they insist that masculinity is always dependent on forms of femininity which are opposite. It may often be the case that masculinity has depended on oppositional forms of femininity, but we run the risk of reifying gendered dichotomies if we start out with an empirical research framework which asserts that it always must. That is why the “alleged” is so important in Enloe’s formulation highlighted above (“masculinity is constructed out of ideas about femininity, its alleged opposite.”)

We noted in the previous chapter that for real and effective change, hegemonic masculinity and the hierarchical structure of gender relations must be challenged. It is not easy to transcend dichotomous thinking – indeed, as Hooper points out, it is made very difficult as we are limited by the structures of language we have inherited (Hooper 2000: 52). However, the instability and fluidity of discourse highlighted above give grounds for optimism. As Hooper argues, because the ingredients of masculinity are ambiguous and contradictory, there is room for political and interpretative struggles as to what counts as masculinity, and consequently, who gets power and status. Hooper thus argues that feminists have to go well beyond the mere *identification* of gender dichotomies and privileging of ‘masculine’ traits if they are to achieve more than reinforcement of dichotomies (Hooper 2000: 52-53). Instead, they must focus on *how* the ingredients ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ get to be defined in relation to each other in a particular context. The normative perspective thus informs the empirical strategy. As well as looking for linking and differentiation and both radical and non-radical Others, then, identifying strategies of feminisation and masculinisation highlights both the dynamism of gender identity construction.

Feminisation and Masculinisation

Looking for non-radical Others does not just mean paying attention to the other people that soldiers come into contact with on PSOs. As well as relations with others, the practices soldiers are involved in on PSOs are crucial to understanding their masculinity; it is through the discursive enactment of policies and practices that identity comes into being (Hansen 2006: 21). Building on Hansen’s reading strategy by bringing in Hooper’s work in analysing masculinities, I suggest that focusing on feminisation and masculinisation helps investigate how the practices, skills and activities soldiers are involved in on PSOs are positioned in discourse. As discussed in the previous chapter, one way in which male conformity to

hegemonic ideals is policed is by the threat of feminisation: demonizing subordinate masculinities through linking them to traits conventionally associated with femininity. As such, feminisation operates not only to circumscribe and downgrade female activities, but is also a powerful tool in the construction and maintenance of hierarchies of masculinities; groups can be privileged at the expense of feminized Others, regardless of sex or gender (Hooper 2000: 71).

It is worth going into more detail as to what one is actually looking for in discourse when looking to identify strategies of masculinisation and feminisation. In one sense, if we take seriously the idea of gender as body-reflexive practice, that gender identities are constantly created and recreated through actually embodied people participating in practices, the more men do something, the more it becomes masculine; and the more women do something, the more it becomes feminine. For instance, agricultural work is seen as masculine work in the UK, where men make up the majority of farmers, and feminine in many parts of Africa, where it is carried out by women (Connell 2002a). Rosemary Pringle's *Secretaries Talk* details the way in which clerical work was deemed masculine when it was predominantly done by men, only changing to become the archetypal "women's work" when, due to increased demand for labour, women began to dominate the workforce (Pringle 1989). The more men are involved in a practice, perhaps especially the case in the context of the Army, because of the association of combat and manliness, the more 'manly' it is likely to become.

Masculinisation and feminisation can also involve the linking of practices to terms which have conventionally or traditionally been understood or marked masculine or feminine. Both masculinity and femininity can be termed 'floating' or 'empty' signifiers – terms which are dependent on that to which they are linked in order to give them meaning (Howarth 2000; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Masculinisation thus involves linking practices to other practices or terms which have traditionally been held to be masculine. For example, a practice such as negotiation may not be considered masculine *per se*, but when it is linked to strength and bravery, for example, it becomes a more masculine practice. Conversely, when it is linked to terms such as compromise and empathy, and differentiated from conflict and force, it becomes a more feminine practice.

Finally, masculinisation and feminisation involve discursive strategies to privilege or downgrade particular practices, individuals and groups. To a certain extent, then, if a practice is privileged as a superior way of doing things, it can be said to be masculinised; if it is described in negative terms, it can be said to be feminised. This argument is based on the feminist insight much discussed already that in gender as a system of meaning, that which is associated with masculinity is privileged over femininity. In this instance, when negotiation is linked in discourse to terms such as superior and effective, it is positioned as masculine.

This suggestion that privileging and discrediting in and of themselves can be used to identify strategies of masculinisation and feminisation is problematic, however. It risks conflating masculinity with everything that is privileged, everything which is powerful. The term then becomes meaningless: it becomes just another term for everything which has power. Power is an important aspect of masculinity, and the insight that gender structures language and accords power to that which is deemed masculine remains crucial. At the same time, masculinity's relationship with actually embodied men, albeit complicated, cannot be neglected. To argue that masculine terms in our language are masculine merely by virtue of them being privileged terms is to lose sight of the active bodily processes of constructing masculinity – Connell's body-reflexive practice. The reason that some practices, for example, strength, are deemed masculine is because men have consistently engaged in and enjoyed such practices. Perhaps a better approach, then, is to look for combinations of strategies. The linking of practices to terms which are linked to power, privilege and superiority cannot alone make them masculine, but when seen in combination with linkages to men's bodies or to terms which have long been associated with masculinity, they consolidate the process of masculinisation. The same pertains for femininity – it is important to be alert to the way in which making a practice inferior might be a way of feminising it, but to argue that all inferior practices are always feminised, is to conflate femininity and lack of power. Instead, the reading strategy is to look for the combination of positioning as inferior with linkages to other feminised terms or female bodies.

III: Applying the Interpretative Strategy: Method and Sources

In order to investigate British soldier masculinities in the context of PSOs, various sources of British Army discourse were collected: official sources produced by the British Army itself, namely doctrine, policy documents, training material and recruitment material, and unofficial

sources, that is, soldiers' reflections on PSOs, found in autobiographies and memoirs, in comments to the media, and in informal interviews on two field trips to observe military training. It is perhaps worth pointing out at this stage that the aim was not to *contrast* the official discourse with the unofficial discourse, although that would no doubt constitute an interesting research project, but to use a wide variety of sources in order to explore the construction of military masculinities on PSOs. The sections which were relevant to PSOs were either transcribed – in the case of doctrine, policy documents, and soldiers' reflections – or studied within their context – in the case of training and recruitment material. In both cases, the data was subjected to the reading strategy outlined above: investigated for linkages and differentiations and strategies of masculinisation and feminisation. Particular care was taken to ensure that data was collected that referred to the skills, practices, motivations and rewards involved in a PSO and to the relations that soldiers were involved in on PSOs in order to capture both the active and relational aspects of gender identity construction. This section goes on to discuss the sources in more detail and some of the particular issues connected to their use, before concluding with some final reflections on the validity, generalizability and reliability of this approach.

Policy and Doctrine

Several MoD and Army policy documents were analysed, with a particular focus on military doctrine. Military doctrine acts to provide the armed forces with a framework of guidance for the conduct of operations; it is about how those operations should be directed, mounted, commanded, conducted, sustained and recovered. Military doctrine is targeted principally at members of the armed forces, but its authors generally recognise that members of parliament, academics, industrialists, journalists and members of the general public all might have an interest, and write the doctrine accordingly (Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre 2004: iii). This intention means that military doctrine is not just a list of instructions and guidelines; it is written for a whole variety of other reasons: to set the tone of military culture, to motivate and train soldiers, and to persuade, convince and impress the wider audience. As Trotsky commented in the early 1920s, the power of Soviet military doctrine lay “not in commanding but in persuading, convincing and impressing through authoritativeness” (cited in Thornton 2000). As such, it provides a great deal of information not only about the practices soldiers will be engaged in, but the values, culture and worldview of the military, thus providing rich source of data for discourse analysis into gendered identities. Thornton argues that the British military has traditionally been averse to

doctrine, preferring to rely on experience and training, and that military doctrine is not something which soldiers use to guide their every action (Thornton 2000). As PSOs are relatively new operations, however, military doctrine may play more of a role here than in more traditional operations. More importantly for our purposes, doctrine does not need to be a perfect guide to what actually happens to shed light on military culture, values and worldview, to be a good source of military discourse relating to gender identities PSOs. As Hooper comments in relation to *The Economist*, even the driest of texts contain messages about gender by sending out signals inviting readers to identify with particular versions of masculinity within (Hooper 2000: 123).

Two of the most recent major Defence White Papers were analysed, the 1998 *Strategic Defence Review* (Ministry of Defence 1998) (along with its 2002 new chapter), and the 2003 *White Paper: Delivering Security in a Complex World* (Ministry of Defence 2003), as they were the first to set out the proposal that the British military be a Force for Good around the world.¹⁶ The White Papers were primarily useful for setting the context, however, and giving weight to this claim that the British Army is attempting to fashion itself as chiefly concerned with international peace and security; they contain very little detail about PSOs.

The key doctrinal document analysed was the one governing PSOs, namely *Joint Warfare Publication (JWP) 3-50: The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations* (Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre 2004). *JWP 3-50* was published in 2004 with the stated purpose “to provide accessible information and practical guidance for military personnel involved at the Operational Level in Peace Support Operations (PSOs)” (Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre 2004 iii). Written by Lieutenant Colonel Philip Wilkinson, an ex-Special Forces soldier who turned to focus on developing doctrine for PSOs, it is the most comprehensive doctrine written on PSOs in the UK, and the first to set out a positive, proactive role for British armed forces in response to complex political emergencies (Thornton 2000). *JWP 3-50* was thus a central source for this research because of the level of detail about what is demanded of a soldier on a PSO. It also provides a good example of the way in which doctrine has a wider role than giving information and guidance to soldiers. *JWP 3-50* was clearly written with an eye to explaining to those outside the military what the

military perspective is on PSOs: it was published as a glossy, 250 page booklet and is available to members of the public on the internet. It is also used to inform training programmes, which makes it an important source for this research because of the way in which, as chapters two and three made clear, training is a crucial site for the construction of masculinities. *JWP 3-50* was compared and contrasted with *Joint Warfare Publication (JWP) 0-01 British Defence Doctrine* which underpins all British Joint Doctrine Publications and is “intended to convey the British approach to military activity at every level” (Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre 2001).¹⁷ Using *JWP 0-01* as a point of comparison highlighted what was specific to doctrine concerning PSOs.

Recruitment Material

It is not possible or appropriate to isolate recruitment material that is specific to PSOs as it tends to be of a more general nature, rather than related to specific operations. The whole range of operations, including PSOs, tend to be referred to in the general recruitment material, however, which encompasses pamphlets, posters, magazines, websites and DVDs, offering much scope for the analysis of gendered identities. This material employs photographs, graphics and other visual forms of representation to a much greater degree than the other official sources which makes it particularly useful because images carry messages about gender by bringing in bodies in more overt ways than can often be achieved in text.

Although recruitment material is designed to present an attractive and positive image of Army life, and thus can be accused of being a biased, subjective and even unrealistic portrayal, this does not prevent its use as a source of data on military masculinities. As discussed further below, whether recruitment material is one hundred percent accurate about military life or not matters less for our purposes than the gendered messages it sends out about PSOs.¹⁸

¹⁶ The White Papers are available on the Ministry of Defence website at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PolicyStrategyandPlanning/PolicyStrategyAndPlanning.htm> [accessed September 2007]

¹⁷ Both publications are also available on the Ministry of Defence website at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/DoctrineOperationsandDiplomacyPublications/JWP/> [Accessed September 2007]

A sample of recruitment literature from over the last fifteen years was analysed, along with the current recruitment DVD.¹⁹ Examples from the Saatchi and Saatchi developed “Be the Best” campaign, launched in the 1990s and providing the Army slogan still in use today, have also been drawn upon, especially those that highlight PSOs or operations which appear to include elements of humanitarian or peace support. The successful “Be the Best” campaign was explicitly designed to show the entire range of challenges which the Army presents, and therefore includes many images of what appear to be PSO situations (Brown 2002). The adverts produced for TV and cinema, in particular, offer a further rich source of data for the exploration of gendered identities in the British Army, again, by offering images of masculinity, in this case, “fully-fleshed,” for soldiers to identify with or resist.

Training Literature

Again, there is not an independent literature on training for PSOs as the British Army considers all of its training to be about equipping soldiers for the full range of operations they may encounter in their careers (Ministry of Defence 2004). Several MoD documents give more information about how this is to be achieved: a Policy Paper on Individual Training and Education in the Armed Forces (Ministry of Defence 2004), a Report into Modernising Defence Training (Ministry of Defence 2001), and the annual reports of the Army Training and Recruitment Agency (Army Recruitment and Training Agency 2005). As well as these policy documents and reports, several power-point presentations used to train soldiers, obtained when on field trips to military training, were also analysed. These power-point presentations focus on bringing PSOs to life for soldiers, elucidating *JW3-50* and sharing the experiences of those who have returned from operations. As such, they provide a further source of British Army discourse on PSOs. As with doctrine, training material can be factual and dry, but it also provides the opportunity to investigate gender

¹⁸ Military recruitment material is arguably not totally unrealistic – the military has an interest in making sure recruits have a fair perception of what a soldier’s life will involve, as retention rates are a bigger problem than recruitment.

¹⁹ It is recognised that this is not all the recruitment material that could have been analysed. The sample of recruitment material was sent to me by the Army Recruitment and Training Agency, based on what they had left in the office, and is therefore not fully comprehensive. There have also been several TV, cinema and radio campaigns, print campaigns with adverts placed in newspapers and magazines, websites devoted to recruitment, magazines devoted to young people who might be enticed into the Army, and other initiatives, but time and resources made it impossible to track down and analyse everything. The sample analysed thus offers a flavour of British Army recruitment strategies, rather than a comprehensive analysis.

identities because, particularly in the power-point presentations, it offers up versions of masculinity with which soldiers participating in training can adopt or resist.

Autobiographical Accounts of Soldiers on PSOs

Autobiographical accounts of soldiers who had served on PSOs are a particularly rich source of data for this research. They provide a useful addition to the official sources, by bringing in the perspective of those on the ground. In written autobiographies, memoirs and articles, soldiers reflect on who they are, what they had to do, and how they feel about PSOs. As such, there is a wealth of material from which to investigate the linkages and differentiations and strategies of masculinisation and feminisation involved in gender identity construction. Autobiographical reflections also bring in bodies through the reflections on what PSOs required of soldiers' bodies, how PSOs made their bodies feel, and how their bodies compared to other actors in the PSO environment. As gender is constructed in relation to social definitions of a man or woman's place as well as in relation to physical embodiment, autobiographical reflections are also useful in that they often contain soldiers' reflections on the expectations and demands placed on them by their interpretation of appropriate masculine behaviour. Although soldiers rarely *explicitly* reflect on gender identities or masculinity, the more expressive language used in autobiographical reflections, compared to official sources of Army doctrine, means that gender as symbolic structure of meaning is never far from the surface.

The autobiographical reflections were predominantly in the form of published books, but also included one long article from the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Journal.²⁰ They covered a time period from operations in the Balkans in the mid 1990s to more recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.²¹ Some cover one operation, whilst others focus on a military career spanning several operations. Most are written by officers, which is an unfortunate limitation in the sense that this thesis is interested in ordinary soldiers as well as officers, but they cover a wide range of ranks and include details about the activities,

²⁰ Again, this is not every autobiography or memoir written by British soldier with experience of PSOs or operations containing PSO elements. It is, however, a fairly comprehensive selection. Further autobiographical reflections could be gathered from other sources, such as Army magazines, journals and websites. Again, time limited the scope of this study, but the ever increasing popularity of this sort of literature of soldiers' tales indicates that there is much potential for future research.

perceptions and attitudes of the soldiers under their command. I introduce them here in order of publication.

In *Broken Lives: A Personal View of the Bosnian Conflict* (Stewart 1994), Colonel Bob Stewart details his time as a Commanding Officer in Bosnia from September 1992 to May 1993. "Operating in Bosnia" (Duncan 1994), is an article based on a speech Colonel Alistair Duncan gave to the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) about his experiences commanding a UN Battalion in Bosnia in 1993. In *Close Quarter Battle: In Action with the SAS* (Curtis 1997), Mike Curtis, an ordinary soldier, details his military career which spans from the Falklands in 1982, to training for the SAS and operating in Bosnia. In *Fighting for Peace: Lessons from Bosnia* (Rose 1998), General Sir Michael Rose reflects on his time as Commander of the UN Protection Force in Bosnia from January 1994 to January 1995. *Trusted Mole: A Soldier's Journey into Bosnia's Heart of Darkness* (Stankovic 2000) covers Parachute Major Milos Stankovic's experiences in Bosnia. Stankovic's name comes from his Yugoslavian father and he is fluent in Serbo-Croat; this unusual background for a British officer, as well as making him particularly useful for the Army as a battalion liaison officer in 1993, and then as a liaison officer in 1994 under General Rose, make his account particularly thoughtful and reflective. In *An Unorthodox Soldier: Peace and War and the Sandline Affair* (Spicer 2000), Tim Spicer concentrates on his experiences setting up the Private Military Company Sandline International, but he also mentions his experiences in the Balkans. Covering the same time period as Bob Stewart, Monty Woolley's, *Cleanse Their Souls: Peacekeeping in Bosnia's Civil War 1992-3* (Woolley 2004) is the story of this second lieutenant's experiences on his first operational tour. In *Rules of Engagement: A Life in Conflict* (Collins 2005), Tim Collins recounts his long military career, including operations in Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone and Iraq. Other more recent autobiographical accounts also focus on Iraq and Afghanistan, namely Leo Docherty's *Desert of Death: A Soldier's Journey from Iraq to Afghanistan* (Docherty 2007) and Steven McLaughlin's *Squaddie: A Soldier's Story* (McLaughlin 2007).

Two further books written by journalists but based on extensively quoted material from soldiers serving in Iraq were also analysed: Richard Holmes' *Dusty Warriors: Modern*

²¹ As the next chapter goes on to discuss in more detail, Iraq and Afghanistan are best characterised as multi-dimensional operations, rather than PSOs, but they contain elements of humanitarian and peace

Soldiers at War (Holmes 2006) and Mark Nicol's *Condor Blues: British Soldiers at War* (Nicol 2007). Journalistic interpretations of soldiers' words raises a further set of issues about reliability and validity (see below), but the extended quotes were considered to be of the same nature as autobiographical reflections and were therefore also included as a source of data.

Reflection in the Media

General media coverage of PSOs was not analysed as a source of British Army discourse, although it was used to inform the research. Where British Army personnel were quoted in the media, reflecting on PSOs, however, this was taken to be data of a similar sort to autobiographical reflections and was thus included for analysis. It has been included in this section on unofficial sources, because such comments were often reported as being the individual views of military personnel, and not the official position of the Army.

Fieldtrips to Training for PSOs

A further source for British Army discourse on PSOs was two fieldtrips to observe training being delivered to military personnel. One was part of the basic infantry training which all soldiers go through, based at the Land Operations (LandOps) training centre at Warminster.²² The other was delivered by OPTAG, the military's Operational Training and Advisory Group, and was pre-deployment training for Marines who were about to go to Afghanistan.²³ The field trips offered the opportunity for informal conversations with Land Ops personnel with an overview of military training, OPTAG personnel in charge of training for PSOs, and a small group of Colour Sergeants, Non-Commissioned Officers, from six different regiments with a variety of experience on PSOs. As the conversations were small in number and conducted on an ad hoc basis with military personnel as they were participating in their training, the interview data is not used as a primary data source of British Army discourse for this thesis. Rather, the conversations were primarily used to test the findings which arose from the other sources of British Army discourse above.

support, and therefore are included in this thesis.

²² Carried out May 14-15 2006

²³ Carried out May 9-12 2006

Issues of Reliability, Validity and Generalizability

Several issues emerge when undertaking discourse analysis, particularly when dealing with soldiers' reflections: issues of reliability, validity and generalizability. In terms of validity, critics raise the question of how do we know if the soldiers are telling the truth? Authors of autobiographies can overemphasise some things, neglect others, and misinterpret relations (Harrison 2001). There are issues related to memory (do they even remember exactly what happened?) complicated by issues of self-selections (have they just included what makes them look good?) complicated by the input of an editor (what has been added to make it a "good read"?). The basic argument is that social science should be about testing hypotheses; autobiographies might give insights that lead to formulation of hypotheses, but do not give us the data for testing them (Roberts 2002: 6). As such, these criticisms reflect the general criticisms of social constructivist approaches. In traditional positivist social science, "language is viewed as a transparent medium, unambiguously reflecting stable, singular meanings" but, as we have seen, language can also be understood as deeply constitutive of reality, not simply a technical device for establishing meaning (see Riessman 1993: 4). Whereas in positivist accounts, the events are of interest, here the language is all important. Discourse analysis is concerned with how the protagonist interprets things and then systematically interpreting their interpretations. Narratives are interpretative and in turn require interpretation - they don't "speak for themselves" or "provide direct access to other times, places or cultures" (Personal Narratives Group 1989: 264). In other words, the issue of whether the authors are telling the truth or not is less relevant than what they reveal about identities:

When talking about our lives, people lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they are revealing truths. These truths don't reveal the past "as it actually was," aspiring to a standard of objectivity. They give us instead the truths of our experiences... Unlike the Truth of scientific ideal, the truths of personal narratives are neither open to proof nor self-evident. We come to understand them only through interpretation, paying careful attention to the contexts that shape their creation and to the worldviews that inform them (Personal Narratives Group 1989: 261).

In sum, we do not necessarily know if soldiers are telling the truth, but the aim is to explore discursive constructions of gendered identity, rather than what actually happened on PSOs.

If validity concerns whether the technique studies what it is supposed to (Plummer 2001: 154), the method is perfectly valid.

In terms of generalizability, here critics ask how we know that these soldiers are representative of broader trends. Again, the critics' accusation misses the point of the research. When researching the construction of masculinities, it is doubtful whether there can ever be generalizability. Masculinities are always complex and contradictory; we would not expect to be able to identify groups of people who think and act the same. Rather, the aim is to suggest very broad and flexible models. The selection of ten autobiographies, supplemented by the additional sources mentioned above, is intended to be a big enough range of data to be able to argue that each is not a unique case, there are some similarities and themes, and therefore, maybe the makings of a new model of masculinity. It is not intended to be a scientific measurement of the current state of masculinities in the British Army today. At the same time, the relatively limited extent of the data enables the researcher to carry out a close and detailed examination of the texts in order to provide insights and understandings about masculinity construction for these soldiers in ways which would be difficult if hundreds of accounts were consulted (Plummer 2001: 153).

Finally, in terms of reliability, critics suggest it is impossible for the researcher to avoid reading and interpreting the soldiers' stories in a very personal, subjective, individual way. Given that the soldiers' memoirs are written for different audiences and different purposes than to be read for constructions of gender, there is a risk that the reading is skewed, misrepresents the authors, and is even unethical. Again, it is debatable how much it matters – in terms of the aims *and* ethics of this thesis – that the authors intended a different readership: their accounts are published memoirs, publicly available in any library, and the authors know that in publishing their life story it will be open for readers to interpret it in whatever way they choose. That said, the researcher has a duty to be as careful and reflexive in interpretation as possible, so as to avoid wilfully misrepresenting the author or misleading the reader of the thesis. This can be done by quoting texts as fully as space allows, so that readers can confirm or question the interpretations made of the text.

One final methodological question remains to be considered. How does one identify a discourse? When analysing this kind of variety of sources, it could be argued that each

contains its own discourse of identity construction – that in each autobiography, for example, each soldier is constructing his own masculinity – and that it is both impossible and mistaken to suggest that themes exist, to justify the claims that there are models of masculinity emerging from the discourse. The social constructivist understanding of gender, however, argues just that: gender has a social aspect, masculinities exist beyond each individual, and we can speak of models of masculinity. Gender construction happens within a larger discursive field than in one individual's reflections; it always inevitably draws on the social and structured nature of language (Hansen 2006: 51). The intertextuality of the sources – the process by which meanings are circulated between texts through the use of various visual and literary codes and conventions (Hooper 2000 122-3) – means that it is possible to read across them and look for themes. Just as with the Foreign Policy texts used by Hansen to investigate constructions of the 'national self', all the sources of British Army discourse used are located within a larger textual web (Hansen 2006: 55). They all emanate from the same institution; soldiers writing autobiographies might have read the doctrine; probably will have been trained using it; or carry out training using it; will have seen the recruitment material; will have discussed issues with other soldiers; and often appear in each others' autobiographies.²⁴

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the methodology and methods involved in this research. It has suggested that a social constructivist approach best combines attention to gender as a relatively fluid symbolic system – crucial for exposing the problematic role of masculinities in militarism, war and peacekeeping – with the possibility of a progressive politics. As gender is not defined as domination or oppression, the possibility of change in gender relations is kept open. The insights of Hansen's discourse theory and Hooper's textual analysis were combined in order to suggest an interpretative strategy to take to a wide variety of sources of British Army discourse. Both Hansen and Hooper develop methodologies which are attentive to power dynamics in constructions of gender but which also stress the importance of a theoretical perspective which is open to change. Before we can turn to the actual analysis of British Army discourse, however, we need to outline the changing

²⁴ This intertextuality could be mapped much more extensively and, as mentioned above, could include many more sources, in a future, more comprehensive research project.

operational context of the British Army in order to justify the claim that the British Army is increasingly involved in PSOs.

Part Two: The Case of the British Army

Chapter Five: The British Army as a “Force for Good”

This chapter justifies the assumption that the British Army’s involvement on PSOs offers an interesting context for the exploration of changing military masculinities. Many argue that due to its long history of policing an Empire and counter-insurgency operations, PSOs are nothing new for the British Army. As all operations involve several aims and a variety of tasks, British soldiers have always been involved in operations which could be described as achieving peace and security, involving “winning hearts and minds.” Another common argument is that, because the military is primarily focused on the security elements of a PSO, the tasks it is required to carry out are neither new nor different from tasks it has always carried out. As the military’s expertise is fighting and establishing security, it has always focused on this aspect of operations, and does not get involved in activities that amount to actually *resolving* conflicts. Although different in their logic, both arguments suggest that there is little point in exploring British military masculinities in the context of PSOs, because any difference in terms of masculinities cannot be due to so-called changes in the operational context. This chapter argues, however, that PSOs have become an increasingly important part of the British Army role, and that they are significantly different in nature from traditional war-fighting operations in a variety of ways, including the overall aims, the day-to-day activities of soldiers, and the motivations and rewards.

The first section addresses the argument that the British Army has always been involved in “hearts and minds” operations and that therefore that there is nothing new about PSOs. Through tracing the operational context of the British Army since the end of the Cold War, it is suggested that, although winning hearts and minds has indeed always been a part of the British soldier’s role, PSOs now form a much more central role in the Army’s remit and practice. Moreover, although the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the ensuing War on Terror have complicated this trend, the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan involve elements of PSOs, and as such, it can be argued the British Army remains committed, at least officially, to being a “Force for Good.” In other words, the increased involvement in PSOs in the 1990s was not just a time-limited departure from the norm of war-fighting in British military history.

The second section addresses the debate that the military role in a PSO is focused on attaining a level of security at which the actual business of conflict resolution can happen; as such, it is not the military which is really involved in conflict resolution or creating peace. As it is merely creating the conditions for conflict resolution to take place, it is not involved in many new or different practices at all, but the same old security functions as it always has been. Here it is suggested that PSOs *are* significantly different from war-fighting, that they can be said to be ultimately about resolving conflicts, and, crucially, that – although it may vary from operation to operation, soldier to soldier, and day to day – soldiers themselves are involved in activities that amount to conflict resolution.

Arguing for a definition of PSOs as a form of conflict resolution is controversial. As we saw in chapter two, some argue that they are anything but, serving instead as the tools by which centres of neo-liberal power maintain the current order. It is not my intention to close off that very debate by defining PSOs as conflict resolution; indeed questions of the extent to which PSOs genuinely contribute to international peace and security will be returned to and discussed extensively in chapters eight and nine. Rather, the aim of this chapter is to argue that in terms of official UK government and military policy, PSOs are a significant priority and their stated intention is to establish peace and security.

1: The UK and the Emergence of Military Humanitarianism

In terms of the first debate, it is sometimes argued that the qualities necessary for PSOs are exactly the same as those that the Army had always shown in its substantial history of Counter Insurgency (COIN) Warfare, predominantly in Northern Ireland, but throughout its imperial history. This argument builds on the premise that the culture of the British Army has been primarily shaped by policing a huge empire and only secondarily by conventional wars in Europe. It suggests that the imperial role left the British military with a commitment to minimal use of force in operations, in comparison to other nations such as the US, who tend to regard PSOs as low intensity conflict rather than conflict management and resolution (Cassidy 2004). As they appreciate the fact that such operations involve both political and military facets, the British are well versed in the idea that at times, soldiers also need to act as politicians (Thornton 2000: 44-5).

This view is often expressed by military figures themselves. Thornton documents the considerable resistance to developing doctrine for PSOs amongst many military personnel, partly due to a traditional antipathy towards doctrine for any purpose but also partly due to the belief that PSOs were nothing new (Thornton 2000: 45). He also notes the following comments made by British Officers about the operation into Bosnia. Major General Willocks writes: “I do not consider interventions in other peoples’ conflicts as being new at all... we have always done it” (Willocks 1994: 6, cited in Thornton 2000: 45). Similarly, Brigadier Andrew Cumming, who led the first British troops into Bosnia, wrote at the time: “There is nothing remarkable or unique about Op Grapple [the deployment’s official designation] which demands any radical rethink of doctrine. Both our doctrine and our education and, most importantly, our officers and soldiers are good enough to adapt to any change of role or circumstance to achieve the best results” (Cumming 1994: 26, cited in Thornton 2000: 45). This view is not unanimous however, with Colonel Alistair Duncan (the Commanding Officer of the second regiment to be sent to Bosnia) recording his view that “There was no template to be drawn from my experiences in the Army and the easy solution that ‘it has worked elsewhere so it will work here’ was clearly a non-starter. It wasn’t a task the British Army had done before” (Duncan 1994: 11). This section outlines the history of the British Army since the end of the Cold War in order to resolve these questions about the novelty and centrality of PSOs.

From the End of the Cold War to Peacekeeping in the Balkans

The fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989 marked, in a symbolic way, the beginning of the end of the Cold War; a war which had been primarily defined by its two superpower rivals, the United States and the Soviet Union, but which had ramifications for every other nation in the world. As such, its ending has often been cited as a pivotal moment in International Relations, both theory and practice. There is less agreement, however, over what the actual meanings and implications are. This section outlines the implications for the foreign and military policies of the UK, and argues that, as for many western nations, the end of the Cold War led to a new role on the world stage for the UK and, in particular, its military.

The end of the Cold War has been interpreted as both furthering and hampering the prospects for international peace and security. Optimists argued that the US, USSR and their allies

cutting their defence budgets, embarking on or renewing their commitment to nuclear non-proliferation regimes, and refraining from using their veto powers at the UN to thwart peacekeeping operations pointed to an important ‘peace dividend’, which could be capitalised on to create a more stable and peaceful world. This provided the context for significant reductions in government spending on the military in the UK. As the government of the time was Conservative, traditionally more supportive of military than the Labour opposition, this was done with some reluctance, but in the face of domestic pressure it was hard to justify Cold War levels of spending (Dorman 2005: 241).

More pessimistic accounts of the impact of the end of the Cold War pointed to increased instability around the world. The number of wars each year sharply increased after 1989, and without the obvious connection to Cold War allegiances, appeared more complex and intractable. Terms such as “complex political emergencies” (Duffield 2001: 12) or “new wars” (Kaldor 1999), were adopted in order to capture the sense in which the majority of post Cold War conflicts were multifaceted in both cause and impact, with political, economic and social dimensions. Predominantly intrastate, and brought about when governments were either unable or unwilling to prevent violence within their borders, these conflicts of the 1990s were made more complicated and lethal by modern technology and communications and in particular by the spread of cheap highly destructive weapons (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001; Kaldor 1999). In many cases, the manipulation of racial, religious and ethnic differences were used to brutal effect, making identity as important a factor as politics and economics. As such, such complex political emergencies were marked by particularly horrific devastation and suffering caused to civilians in the form of casualties, ethnic cleansing, refugees, internally displaced people and the destruction of cities and infrastructure.

The rise in incidence of these complex political emergencies, alongside increased media coverage of the human rights violations involved, led to mounting calls for international interventions to deal with the devastation. As a result, United Nations Peacekeeping experienced a rapid expansion – both in terms of the number of operations it conducted and in the breadth of the mandates. Whereas the UN was involved in a total of 18 peacekeeping

operations from 1948 to 1989, it has been involved in more than twice that, 42, since 1990.²⁵ Moreover, whilst the early operations were ‘traditional peacekeeping’ operations – defined by three key features – consent, impartiality and non-use of force – the operations in the 1990s became much more complex. United Nations peacekeeping initially developed during the Cold War era as a means to preserve the peace between states by deploying unarmed or lightly armed military personnel from a number of countries, under UN command, between the armed forces of the former warring parties. As a general rule, UN peacekeepers were deployed when the ceasefire was in place and the parties to the conflict had given their consent. Only lightly armed, and only permitted to use force in self-defence, UN troops observed from the ground and reported impartially on adherence to the ceasefire, troop withdrawal or other elements of the peace agreement. However, the complex political emergencies of the 1990s often demanded an international force to intervene in the cause of peace, but with little sign of the conditions of consent, impartiality or non-use of force. Moreover, more complex tasks were often added to the mandates.

What impact did this international context have on British foreign and military policy? With its smaller forces due to the aforementioned cuts in government spending, the Ministry of Defence was initially unwilling to undertake overseas commitments in the cause of international peace and security. For example the British did not offer help to Somalia in 1991, and initially resisted sending in peacekeepers to the former Yugoslavia (Dorman 2002: 188).²⁶ By 1992, however, this policy was proving unsustainable, for a variety of reasons. Domestic public opinion and media pressure to “do something” about situations like the former Yugoslavia where an archetypal complex political emergency was being played out on the very doorstep of Europe, were mounting by the day. Another factor was the issue of the UK’s seat on the UN Security Council and the responsibilities this gave the UK to act. The 1993 Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Defence concluded that:

²⁵ A history of UN Peacekeeping, including useful facts and figures, can be found at the Department of Peacekeeping’s website: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/index.asp>

²⁶ During this period, however, it did send the Royal Marines to participate in Operation Haven, aimed at creating “safe havens” for the Kurds who had fled Northern Iraq in the aftermath of the First Gulf War in 1991. This task was a form of PSO, as it was defined as a cross between humanitarian aid and provision of security for the Kurdish people (see <http://britains-smallwars.com/RRGP/SafeHaven.htm> accessed August 2007). As the need for this operation arose as a result of UK and US action in the Gulf, it perhaps seemed less optional than peacekeeping operations in other parts of the world, and

The United Kingdom's position in the world owes much to its defence expertise, and the level of national commitment to defence. The maintenance of that position is at risk if the UK does not respond to the international peacekeeping requirement on a scale commensurate with membership of the Security Council, let alone the legitimate demands of UK public opinion (House of Commons Defence Committee 1993: xxvi).

By 1992, Prime Minister John Major wanted to act, stating humanitarian reasons, but the military was in two minds (Thornton 2000: 48). On the one hand, it could see the benefits: a peacekeeping operation into the Balkans could provide the Army with a new mission and attract resources against a background of questions about what the military's role should be in the post Cold War world and defence cuts. On the other hand, senior officers were anxious, particularly about the dangers of 'mission creep' (a traditional peacekeeping operation becoming something more complex), the risks of over-exerting its smaller forces, and the 'debilitation of operating standards' – a fear that a focus on peacekeeping would dull the Army's expertise at war fighting (Thornton 2000: 48). The prime minister reassured the Army by insisting on a limited role for British troops: they were to escort UN convoys delivering humanitarian aid, nothing more (Thornton 2000: 48). Lt Col Charles Dobbie was put in charge of developing doctrine for operations into these complex political emergencies. His comments illustrate the tensions Army personnel felt about getting involved:

The inter-ethnic conflicts of today seem as complex and intractable as they are unpleasant. To many, non-involvement seems the best option. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, however, it could be argued that the UK is at least partly answerable (some would say morally responsible) for guiding the development of the post Cold War security environment. Within the boundaries of Europe, at any rate, it seems we can hardly avoid entanglement, as the conflict in Yugoslavia has demonstrated - and such conflicts show little sign of abating" (Dobbie 1994: 5)

With the troop commitments to Bosnia, along with smaller contributions to the UN peacekeeping operations in both Cambodia and Mozambique, the initially reticent attitude of the British Government to the deployment of their military forces in PSOs can thus be seen gradually to have given way to a fairly significant commitment.

therefore does not serve to disprove that, in general, the UK government was reluctant to prioritise PSOs at this time.

An Ethical Foreign Policy

On the whole, however, the Conservative government was ideologically more comfortable with the more traditional role of ensuring protection and security of UK and its allies (Dorman 2005: 241). However, in 1997, after eighteen years of Tory rule, a New Labour government won a landslide election and set about introducing an “Ethical Foreign Policy,” one which made an explicit virtue of the UK’s potential to get involved in humanitarian and peace support operations.²⁷ Drawing attention to this shift in attitude at the 1997 Labour Party Conference, George Robertson announced: “We believe that Britain can, and should, be a force for good in the world. We are not isolationists. We are internationalists and proud of it” (cited in Dorman 2005: 239).²⁸ It was clear that the Labour government intended to give greater priority to peace support and humanitarian operations, and backed this up with developing increased capacity for the military to deploy light forces overseas at short notice. The aim was that the commitment to retaining forces able to defend the UK and her allies in high intensity wartime operations would not be diluted but rather complemented by the focus on “defence diplomacy” and peace support operations (Dorman 2002: 189).

This theme of being a “force for good” was taken up in the 1998 *Strategic Defence Review* (SDR) (Ministry of Defence 1998). Inspired by the contribution British troops had made to peacekeeping in the Balkans, it envisioned a key role for the armed forces in responding to complex political and humanitarian emergencies:

Our forces have developed particular experience and expertise in operations of this kind. We regard it as important to strengthen the effectiveness of the international community in peace support and humanitarian operations of all kinds and in co-ordinating between political, humanitarian and military operations (MoD 1998).

Designed to portray the UK as an important player, with its expeditionary forces ready to make a difference anywhere in the world, the cover of the SDR and backdrops to Ministry of

²⁷ Robin Cook, the new Foreign Secretary, introduced the terminology “Ethical Foreign Policy” in his “Mission Statement for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office” FCO, London, 12 May 1997.

Defence conferences featured images such as soldiers feeding babies in Rwanda (Gilligan 1998; Richardson 1998). The Blair Government was thus much less hesitant about embarking on military intervention when tensions flared up again in the Balkans, as they did in 1999 when Serb forces stepped up their brutal campaign of murder, persecution and massive ethnic cleansing of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians. Blair was instrumental in persuading the UK's NATO allies to take military action against the Serbs, and air strikes began in March 1999. Yet Blair was keen to assert from the outset that this intervention was humanitarian in nature, asserting in his speech to the Economic Club of Chicago in April 1999:

This is a just war, based not on any territorial ambitions but on values. We cannot let the evil of ethnic cleansing stand. We must not rest until it is reversed... We will not have succeeded until an international force has entered Kosovo and allowed the refugees to return to their homes (Blair 1999).

In this speech, Blair not only aimed to justify military intervention in the specific case of Kosovo on ethical grounds, and to strengthen Clinton's resolve about the US contribution (Kennedy-Pipe and Vickers 2007: 210), but to outline a new "Doctrine of the International Community," which advocated an internationalist interventionist perspective and a rejection of isolationism. Also in 1999, Blair, along with President Chirac of France, pushed for the European Union to develop its own military capability to support the 'Petersburg tasks,' as humanitarian and peace support tasks are termed in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) (Dorman 2005: 237). Under Prime Minister Blair, the UK contributed troops to UN peacekeeping operations in both East Timor and Sierra Leone, further demonstrating his commitment to using military intervention to further international peace and security.

As such, as Christopher Dandeker reports, the British Army fits the trend towards what have been termed "post-modern militaries," militaries that, amongst other things, have broadened their mission to include the maintenance of international peace and security (Dandeker 2000). The concept of the post-modern military was introduced by military sociologists, Charles Moskos, John Williams and David Segal in their book of the same title in order to

²⁸ The Labour Party's General Election Manifesto also pledged to "restore Britain's pride and influence as a leading force for good in the world."

capture the various changes that have taken place, albeit to varying degrees, across most western militaries in the post Cold War period. These changes include the increasing interpenetrability of civilian and military spheres – both structurally and culturally; a diminution of the differences within armed services based on branch of service, rank and combat versus support roles; a focus on international missions authorised or legitimated by entities beyond the nation state; the internationalization of military forces; and, most relevant for this thesis, a change from fighting wars to non traditional operations (Moskos, Williams, and Segal 2000a: 1-2; also see Cheeseman 2005). Moskos et al note that over 50 military operations by Western nations since end of Gulf War 1 were peacekeeping or humanitarian in nature (Moskos, Williams, and Segal 2000b: appendix), commenting that the term "military humanitarianism" has entered the "new vocabulary and strikes few as an oxymoron" (Moskos, Williams, and Segal 2000a: 3).

By the turn of the century, the issue of humanitarian intervention dominated debates in both the academic discipline and policy circles of international relations, particularly around the question of whether human rights should trump sovereignty, allowing nations to intervene in the affairs of other states in order to bring about peace and security (see for example Forbes and Hoffman 1993; Holzgrefe and Keohane 2003; Jackson 2000; Lyons and Mastanduno 1995; McInnes and Wheeler 2002; Pieterse 1998; Ramsbotham and Woodhouse 1996; Wheeler 2000). Many argued that sovereignty was becoming irrelevant, and that not only should there be a "right to humanitarian intervention," but an actual "responsibility to protect." This became the title of an influential report written by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, who concluded that the international community had not just a right but a responsibility to intervene in situations where states were unable or unwilling to safeguard the human rights of their own citizens (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001). Although the UK was not represented on the twelve member commission, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook was an advisor, and a vocal champion of the idea of humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect. Whilst PSOs were becoming more of a priority for the UK, and the right of western states to intervene militarily in the cause of peace and security was being increasingly argued for in academic and policy debates, however, global events occurred which provided a second significant context for the changing role of the British Army, events which complicated these trends.

The Impact of 9/11

The terrorist attacks on the USA on September 11 2001 were perhaps as “epoch defining” as the end of the Cold War for the military dimension of IR (Smith 2003). In many ways, the increasing acceptance of the right of humanitarian intervention and hopes for a more cosmopolitan world order, advocated by the Blair Government and evident in the publication of *The Responsibility to Protect*, were overshadowed by the new imperative of fighting terrorism. Yet, at the same time, 9/11 and the War on Terror cannot be said to totally undermine the trend towards humanitarianism in the international system. Indeed, the response in the UK can be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, the UK government sought to position itself as the foremost ally of the US, expressing public support and sending the second largest contingent of troops to fight the ensuing War on Terror in both Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. It published a “New Chapter” of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR), giving increased emphasis to more traditional war fighting strategies – such as the need to exploit the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) – and equipment – outlining an increase in armoured forces at expense of the light, mobile forces more useful on PSOs (Ministry of Defence 2002). It made troops and finance available to an extent which dwarfed previous contributions to PSOs. As such, 9/11 could be said to have brought an end to the UK’s focus on PSOs. Dorman, for example, suggests 9/11 marked a “sea change in British military thinking as the government and MoD returned to a greater emphasis on war-fighting tasks” and “moved the focus of Britain's security efforts from the causes to the effects of insecurity” (Dorman 2005: 243).

On the other hand, as Dorman acknowledges, there was also a recognition amongst British political and military leaders that 9/11 called for new military approach: war-fighting had to be matched with nation-building if the war on terror was to succeed (Dorman 2005: 237-8). Indeed, it was noticeable from the start that Blair sought to emphasise a multi-tracked approach to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In Afghanistan, he was at pains to play down the military aspect of the campaign and to emphasise the diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. In his statement on Afghanistan in November 2001, for example, Blair asserted that “The military strategy aimed at defeating the Taliban is clearly succeeding. They are in disarray and retreat. However our job is not yet done by any means. We need urgently to put in place the next political and humanitarian moves that the changing military situation now

permits.”²⁹ In Iraq too, Blair consistently linked the official case for war based on Iraq’s alleged Weapons of Mass Destruction to arguments about the need to address Saddam Hussein’s ruthlessness towards his own people.³⁰ Britain took charge of the area around Basra where the forces were to be involved in mainly nation-building efforts, and the UK government was keen to stress that the crucial contribution of the UK was to come in the post war stabilisation period (Dorman 2005: 243-4).³¹

Arguably, Blair saw the interventions into Afghanistan and Iraq as a continuation of, rather than a departure from, his “Doctrine of the International Community” wherein military intervention could and should be undertaken for humanitarian ends (see Kennedy-Pipe and Vickers 2007). Indeed, alongside the proposals to strengthen war-fighting capacity, the New Chapter of the SDR also maintained that the armed forces would continue to be engaged in PSOs. Moreover, the 2003 *Defence White Paper: Delivery Security in A Complex World* proclaimed two security priorities in the Defence Aim of the UK:

To deliver security for the people of the United Kingdom and the Overseas Territories by defending them, including against terrorism; and to act as a force for good by strengthening international peace (Ministry of Defence 2003).

The first priority reflects the desire to focus on the traditional military task of defence of the nation-state, especially against terrorism, and the second to continued participation in PSOs. Although the ordering suggests which one will be given precedence, the inclusion of the intention to be a “force for good” in the overall defence aim of the UK indicates a continuing serious commitment to PSOs, and, arguably, the humanitarian and peace support elements of the multi-tracked or multi-dimensional operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

²⁹ See the Prime Minister’s speeches and statements at <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page1664.asp> [accessed August 2007]

³⁰ See the Prime Minister’s speeches and statements <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page1139.asp> [accessed August 2007]

³¹ See <http://www.operations.mod.uk/telic/objectives.pdf>, and <http://www.operations.mod.uk/telic/statements.htm> for statements as to the official aims and objectives of the UK in Iraq.

Rather than a “sea-change in British military thinking,” then, something rather more complex was taking place. Some, like Blair, were attempting to fit the new circumstances into the old doctrine, and emphasised the humanitarian aspects of the interventions into Afghanistan and Iraq – the suffering of the civilian populations under the Taliban and the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein respectively. Some, like Robin Cook, architect of the “Ethical Foreign Policy,” could not square the intervention into Iraq with an ethical approach, and resigned from the Cabinet. Military personnel themselves tended to welcome the return to the more traditional roles of war-fighting and defending the UK and her NATO allies (Dorman 2005: 243; Hills 2001), but despite their desires to focus on more traditional defence tasks, the aim of “strengthening international peace and security by being a force for good” remains as one-half of the official “Defence Aim” and therefore central to the stated aims of official UK policy. In terms of current operations, too, despite the complexities of the multi-dimensional operations in Afghanistan and Iraq (which will be discussed further below), the intention to achieve peace and security remains a stated aim and objective of UK government.

II: Peace Support Operations and Conflict Resolution

The second debate is over the same contention – that PSOs are nothing new for British soldiers – but emanates from quite a different perspective. Rather than arguing that British soldiers have always carried out operations and activities which amount to conflict resolution, here it is argued that it has never been their primary role and it remains marginal now. The role of the military on a PSO is focussed and discreet: it is to bring security, so that other actors can get on with the business of conflict resolution. In order to address this argument, it is necessary to discuss what a PSO actually involves: how the British Army define it, and what it means for soldiers on the ground.

In UK military doctrine, *JWP 3-50: The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations*, PSOs are defined as including “conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, and/or humanitarian operations.”³² This formulation indicates that there are generally understood conceptual differences between peacekeeping,

³² JWP 3-50 Paragraph 103

peacemaking, peacebuilding, peace enforcement and so on, whereas, in fact, there has been little such agreement. Some theorists distinguish between peacekeeping as being the correct term for the traditional form of UN peacekeeping, governed by the principles of consent, impartiality and non-use of force, with peacebuilding a separate process which comes afterwards. Some distinguish between peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, but argue that they are all intertwined and need to take place concurrently if peace is to be achieved (Iribarnegaray 2002: 7).³³ Others see peacebuilding as being a comprehensive label for all that needs to take place, both pre and post conflict stages, in order to bring about peace (Keating and Knight 2004). Despite these terminological confusions, the broad definition given in *JWP 3-50* implies that, for the British Army, PSOs include a fairly wide range of activities that might be necessary to establish peace and security.

The broad definition also indicates the recognition that PSOs involve a variety of complex tasks in a situation of limited or uncertain consent. In using the concept of PSO, as opposed to peacekeeping, the British military is positioning itself as believing that it is often desirable and still possible to do something to hasten peace, even when full consent is not given by all parties to the conflict. Philip Wilkinson, as chief architect of British military PSO policy and doctrine, advocated an approach whereby the British military could act even if consent not given, either at tactical (on the ground) or operational (official) level. He acknowledged that such a course should only be embarked upon if there was the political will and enough force capability, but that if these conditions were met, the British military should be involved in peace enforcement – a middle ground between traditional peacekeeping and war. For Wilkinson, it was the only way to deal with the complex political emergencies of the 1990s where consent was inevitably variable and force often required. *JWP 3-50* was written to give guidance as to how to walk this middle ground of enforcing peace. What distinguished peace enforcement from war was the overall aim: achieving peace and security rather than defeating an enemy (Hansen, Woodhouse, and Ramsbotham 2001: 8; Thornton 2000).

As many commentators have pointed out, PSOs now involve much more than the monitoring of ceasefires:

³³ Iribarnegaray defines peacekeeping as aiming “to provide an environment of stability to facilitate the processes of both reconstruction and progress toward peace,” peacemaking as “a diplomatic and political endeavour applied strategically to confrontation situations, through such undertakings as

In defending and saving the lives of distant strangers, there is no doubt that the military mission and the rules of engagement will become more complex. Military forces deployed for what are essentially cosmopolitan purposes are expected to perform a range of tasks, some of which may fall outside their traditional ambit and which may require them to become the security guarantors for the whole process of civil reconciliation and reconstruction (Elliot and Cheeseman 2005c: 4-5)

Bringing about peace in the environment of a complex political emergency can require a wide variety of tasks, including: the supervision of cease-fires; the protection of safety zones and humanitarian workers; the demobilisation of militias and the destruction of their weapons; the design and implementation of de-mining programs; managing the return of refugees and displaced persons; the provision of humanitarian assistance; the restoration of law and order; the supervision of existing administrative structures; the observation, supervision and even organisation and conduct of elections; the training of police or security forces; and support for economic rehabilitation and reconstruction (Elliot and Cheeseman 2005c: 4; Iribarnegaray 2002: 8; Keating and Knight 2004: xxxiii).

JWP 3-50 organises these tasks and techniques into four categories. The first is “Campaign Authority Promotion,” which involves communication techniques such as persuasion, influence, negotiation, mediation and other consent promoting techniques. The second, “Operational Environment Control,” concerns the use of military force in order to control the operational environment. The third, “Interim Management,” includes a variety of activities such as demobilisation, disarmament and rehabilitation, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction. Finally, the fourth, “Common”, includes those tasks and techniques which serve a combination of the above categories, such as information operation and liaison.³⁴ This prioritisation of tasks, along with the language used, reflects the principles and practices of conflict resolution. The management of consent referred to in British doctrine, for example, is based on the principles of impartiality, legitimacy, mutual respect, minimum force, credibility, and transparency, and related to a wide variety of conflict resolution techniques. These include good communication, negotiation and mediation, and positive

mediation and negotiation, in order to arrest the conflict or at least prevent it from escalating” and peacebuilding as “the peaceful political and socio-economic reconstruction of a country.”

³⁴ *JWP 3-50* Paragraphs 501 and 502

approaches to community relations through an active humanitarian programme which is amply resourced to win "hearts and minds" (Hansen, Woodhouse, and Ramsbotham 2001: 11). Moreover, in *JWP 3-50*, it states that PSOs require the close co-operation of civilian agencies. British doctrine thus appears sensitive to the importance of civilian-military relations, of working with NGOs and of local participation in PSOs, regarded as crucial if conflicts are to be successfully resolved (Bellamy and Williams 2004; Gizelis and Kosek 2005; Iribarnegaray 2002; Keating and Knight 2004 xxxviii). Some attribute this to the British experience of many years of counter-insurgency operations, from Malaya to Northern Ireland, where the lesson learned was that working with civilian agencies led to "creation of a comprehensive and self-sustaining peace, rather than a superficial conflict by military force" (Thornton 2000: 57). Overall, the British approach has been described as using both "carrot and stick" as it stresses an understanding of when to offer incentives and when to apply force; this approach and the language used brings British doctrine on PSOs firmly into the realm of conflict resolution (Hansen, Woodhouse, and Ramsbotham 2001: 9-10; Slim 1995; Thornton 2000: 58).³⁵

Afghanistan and Iraq, as discussed above, are operations which differ in significant ways from PSOs in Bosnia, Kosovo or Sierra Leone. They have involved a level of fighting which brings them far closer to traditional war fighting. At least part of both operations, however, is about resolving conflict and creating peace and security. In official terms, both operations included "intervention phases" which involved traditional war fighting, when an enemy was identified and defeated, but also "nation-building" or "stabilisation phases", which were defined in terms similar to PSOs. It is perhaps fair to say, in both cases, that the so-called stabilisation period after the initial invasions has proved illusory, but there is still a demand for activities associated with PSOs.

In Iraq, since victory was declared by American President George W Bush in May 2003, an increasingly violent insurgency has rumbled on, leading to the deaths of over 3000 US soldiers, 170 UK soldiers and potentially over one million Iraqis.³⁶ Yet the operation has

³⁵ They refer to Wider Peacekeeping, but the management of consent is also a key feature of its successor, *JWP 3-50*

³⁶ Figures as of October 2007. Statistics on casualties, particularly Iraqi civilians, is a very controversial topic, and immensely hard to verify. For coalition casualties in Iraq, see <http://icasualties.org/oif/> ; for statistics attempting to count Iraqi civilian casualties, see ; for a BBC overview, see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/guides/456900/456995/html/default.stm>

throughout involved activities associated with PSOs: winning the consent of the population, controlling the use of force, reconstruction and humanitarian aid. Indeed, British Officers describe the mission as involving “three block warfare,” with out and out war in one block, containment in the next, and humanitarian activities being attempted in the third, or, more colloquially, as “smile-shoot-smile.”³⁷ Holmes describes it as “a postmodern conflict comprising extreme violence and near-normality, formally structured military operations and sheer terrorism, diplomatic negotiations and Mafia-style power-broking, all intertwined like the skeins of a rope:”

On the one hand, to deny it the title ‘war’ when 1 PWRR [the Princess of Wales’s Royal Regiment] indulged in bouts of high-intensity military action using armoured vehicles, automatic weapons and an AC-130 gunship would be absurd. But on the other, the existence of rigid rules of engagement, the episodic character of combat and the constant interlacing of violence and negotiation – and the recognition, start to finish, that the solution must eventually be Iraqi – place the conflict beyond the ‘modern war’ of armoured arrows on desert maps (Holmes 2006: 135).

The highlighting of the rigid rules of engagement, the fact that combat was not the sole or ever-present role of the soldiers, the need for negotiation and, crucially an Iraqi solution, indicates that many of the tasks the soldiers have to do are aimed at conflict resolution: “It was, and remains, a struggle to obtain at least the tacit support of the population” (Holmes 2006: 104). Similarly, the fact that the debate in the UK has increasingly shifted towards arguments about a duty or responsibility to stay because of the humanitarian catastrophe which has resulted from the invasion, implies that a central aim of the UK remains the establishment of peace and security and that soldiers will continue to have to carry out conflict resolution activities, in amongst the fighting.

In Afghanistan, things are similarly complex for the British military, especially since taking over control of the multi-national NATO force, ISAF, and being tasked with bringing security to the Helmand region in the south of the country in 2006. Although Defence

³⁷ The origin of the “three block war” phrase is said to come from US Marine General Charles Krulak, who said that “In one city block, troops might be distributing food in a peace support operation; in an adjoining block they might be patrolling, armed, in peace enforcement; and in a third block they might be at it hammer and tongs, war fighting; all at the same time and in the same city”, cited in Holmes, 105.

Secretary John Reid declared that the British Army might be able to come home “without a shot being fired,” the British armed forces are being drawn into a much more dangerous operation, where efforts to counter the narcotics trade, inextricably connected to much of the insecurity in Afghanistan, draw more Afghans into full blown war against the British forces (Ryan 2007: 118). Yet, British government and MoD statements maintain that the aim is not to fight a war, and that their strategy is to win the hearts and minds of local Afghans (Staff and Agencies 2007; Wintour 2007).

Instructors at the Joint Services and Command Staff College at Shrivenham, Wiltshire, where the military trains Officers for PSOs, comment on the difficulty of training for the complex operations such as Afghanistan, with its non-state actors, asymmetric threats and a general greyness about allies and enemies: "Here we must teach cookery, not recipes" (cited in Monahan 2001). Commandant of the College, Air Vice-Marshal Brian Burridge, vividly describes the complexity of current operations in contrast to the Cold War days:

What we are looking at is chaos and ambiguity... Then [during the Cold War] there was this huge battle space and we knew just about everything about it – who the enemy was as well as their doctrine, their kit and training. As an anti-submarine operator I knew their names. All one had to do was adhere to the tactical doctrine that flowed from NATO's general defence plans. I was akin to second violin in a symphony orchestra. These days, I have to play jazz (also cited in Monahan 2001).

The improvisation suggested by the jazz metaphor indicates the variety of tasks that soldiers have to carry out on both multi-dimensional operations, both conflict resolution and combat.

Nonetheless, there is a certain degree of truth in the argument that the military does not itself do conflict resolution. Militaries tend to focus their efforts on the security elements of PSOs or multi-dimensional operations. Indeed, it is clear that the British military wants to limit its role, not wishing to get drawn into areas which are not its area of expertise. As such, *JWP 3-50* is careful to state that it only assumes responsibilities for political or reconstruction activities when civil administration or agencies either do not exist or are unable to operate

because of the crisis.³⁸ Other actors in the PSO environment are equally keen to limit the military to security tasks. Humanitarian agencies, for example, often fear that any overlap or blurring of their activities with the military's will threaten their neutrality or reputation (Jurisic 2004).

At the same time, it is hard to keep the different aspects of PSOs and multi-dimensional operations – security, humanitarian, development, political, civil administration, and so on – entirely separate (Keating and Knight 2004: xliv). In carrying out their security tasks, soldiers are interacting with local civilians all the time: managing crowds, disarming local militias and monitoring ceasefires. If it is to be successful, conflict resolution needs to take place at the cultural-community level as well as at the national level in political negotiations; as such, all peacekeepers, even the lowest ranks, need conflict resolution skills (Hansen, Woodhouse, and Ramsbotham 2001: 14). The ability to be involved in building consent at the same time as being ready to quell any violence is no doubt one of the most challenging tasks for soldiers, but it is a crucial aspect of conflict resolution: being mindful of the long term aims of conflict resolution at the same time as the short term aim of conflict settlement (Hansen, Woodhouse, and Ramsbotham 2001: 13-14). Also, despite the theoretical ideal of separate tasks for separate agencies, as *JWP 3-50* makes clear, if soldiers are the only ones able to deliver aid or rebuild a school in an area because of the precarious security situation, then they tend to get on with the job that needs doing.³⁹ Ultimately, the military contribution cannot be entirely separated from the overall goal of the operation: soldiers' actions will impact on the form of settlement which results from the operation, even if the official line is that they were only involved in securing the environment for peace to be created by other experts.

Arguably, there is considerable overlap in the skills and activities of war and PSOs, perhaps particularly when it comes to the tasks of the individual private soldier. Guarding, patrolling or escorting a convoy, as part of a small patrol can be part of war-fighting or PSOs and may not be understood as being of a different character dependent on the wider definition of the mission. For Officers too, it has been said that the skills and qualities required for PSOs – intelligence, patience, flexibility, determination, and so on – have always been the skills and

³⁸ *JWP 3-50* Paragraph 501

qualities of the best Officers. Yet, there are differences. Some of the tasks associated with PSOs, such as negotiating between two or more belligerents or distributing humanitarian aid are new. Some are not new in and of themselves, but the priority given to them could be said to be new, such as the movement of refugees and displaced persons. Similarly, sometimes the tasks are not new, but the overall aim of the mission does make a difference to how they are carried out. Disarming two opposing belligerent sides will be carried out in a different way than the disarming of your own enemy combatants after defeating them in battle.

Fundamentally, when the overall aim of a PSO is to achieve peace and security rather to defeat an enemy in combat or to counter an insurgency, it seems an oversimplification to claim that this is “nothing new” for soldiers. Rather than thinking of PSOs as “nothing new” or entirely new, perhaps it is more useful to think in terms of a continuum, with overlaps and contradictions. As Cheeseman and Elliot note:

The boundaries between a war fighting and combat mission, a constabulary or protective mission, and a reconstruction mission become blurred. In contrast to the neutral and impartial forces associated with traditional peacekeeping or humanitarian service delivery, militaries engaged in cosmopolitan missions may become parties to the conflict. Thus the need for some coercive capacity remains. Nevertheless, combat plans must endeavour to minimise casualties on all sides and must conform to the laws of war (Elliot and Cheeseman 2005c: 4-5).

Elliot and Cheeseman suggest that the distinction between PSOs and war-fighting should be “lives saved and individuals protected” rather than “enemy combatants killed or infrastructure destroyed”, or “defending the Other” rather than “defending against the Other” (Elliot and Cheeseman 2005a: 278), but that there is not a strict line of separation dividing the operations. Similarly, Moskos et al indicate that it is not so much a total separation that is involved when differentiating PSOs from traditional operations, but rather, a change in emphasis:

³⁹ This is made clear in the autobiographies of soldiers on PSOs, and as such, will be elaborated on in the following chapters.

Separating belligerents, resettling of refugees, delivering of food and medical supplies, providing security for humanitarian organizations, and so forth, create demands that, if not entirely new, are certainly of a larger scale than those with which the military has traditionally contended. Peacekeeping and humanitarian missions have come to occupy a more central position in military doctrine than ever before (Moskos, Williams, and Segal 2000a: 3).

To conclude these debates, then, it is not being claimed that there is a clean break between traditional warfare which took place in the past and PSOs which are taking place now; nor is it being claimed that soldiers are the only actors in all aspects of PSOs. Rather, what is argued is that the British Army is increasingly involved in operations which involve trying to achieve peace and security in very complex circumstances, and with some new rules, practices and principles in play.

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the official policy of the British government and military. It has argued that the British Army has increasingly been involved in PSOs since the Cold War, and that PSOs are significantly different from traditional operations, with the ultimate aim being to establish peace and security through conflict resolution rather than defeating an enemy in combat. That is not to say that they are so different as to make war-fighting operations and PSOs completely separate and distinct from one another. There is a great deal of overlap, in terms of both overall aims and in soldiers' day-to-day activities. Rather than argue that PSOs are a totally new and different type of operation, then, this chapter has suggested the notion of a continuum, where the emphasis of PSOs is on conflict resolution, in contrast to an emphasis on defeating an enemy in through the use of force in more traditional war-fighting operations. In other words, PSOs are *new and different enough* to justify exploring the proposition that British Army masculinities might be changing in interesting ways.

To argue that the British Army has been increasingly involved in PSOs is also not to argue that it is always effective in achieving peace and security or that the British government is always right in its decisions to intervene. Indeed, the recent operations into Afghanistan and Iraq are widely agreed to be disastrous in terms of creating peace and security (see for

example Gray 2007). Rather, the aim of this chapter has been to demonstrate that this is what the British government and military claim to be doing, being a “force for good,” a claim which influences how soldiers behave on the ground. The next chapter goes on to explore how PSOs – the aims, the motivations, the activities involved, the rewards – are constructed in British Army discourse.

Chapter Six: Competing Discourses – Peacekeeping as Masculine, Peacekeeping as Emasculating

The aim of this chapter is to present a gendered analysis of the tasks and techniques that soldiers are involved in on PSOs and how they are represented in British Army discourse, both official and unofficial. How are the conflict resolution practices of a PSO as set out in *JWP 3-50* – consent-building through communication techniques such as negotiation and mediation; controlling the operational environment with minimum force; and management and humanitarian activities in order to win hearts and minds – portrayed in British Army discourse? The chapter argues that within the British Army “master discourse” on PSOs, there are actually two competing discourses, one presenting conflict resolution practices as masculine, the other as feminine, through a variety of strategies of masculinisation and feminisation.

I suggest that when PSOs are positioned as masculine, a new model of military masculinity, “peacekeeper masculinity,” is being constructed; a model which links masculinity and soldiering to the practices of conflict resolution. Soldiers linking PSOs to masculinity are involved – consciously or not – in deconstructing the link between combat and masculinity and redefining masculinity in alternative ways. When PSOs are positioned as emasculating, the traditional links between masculinity, soldiering war and combat are reinforced, along with the hegemonic masculinity in the British Army: “combat masculinity.” The terms “peacekeeper masculinity” and “combat masculinity” are used as short-hand ways of describing the models. As we saw in chapters two and three, to say that the hegemonic masculinity in the British Army was that of the tough, aggressively heterosexual warrior does not mean that it is a description of the majority of soldiers, or the average soldier. Rather, it is an ideal that influences how all soldiers behave and how hierarchies of masculinities are negotiated and renegotiated. The term “peacekeeper masculinity” does not mean to indicate the narrowly defined traditional peacekeeping but all activities aimed at conflict resolution. The term “combat masculinity” means the practices and traits associated with the hegemonic model of British Army masculinity outlined in chapter three; the term is useful because it reminds us of the ideological potency of combat for traditional models of masculinity, despite the fact that so few soldiers are actually involved in combat.

I: Peacekeeping as Masculine

JWP 3-50: The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations

Despite the limitations of military doctrine as a source of data on military masculinities – its relatively dry and formal language, and the gap between policy and the reality of what soldiers do on PSOs – it does contain useful information about the tasks and techniques required on a PSO, the skills and abilities required of soldiers in order to carry them out, and other messages about military culture and ethos, all of which are powerful structural influences on the construction of masculinities. As argued in chapter four, military doctrine sends out a message to readers about appropriate military masculinities, models which soldiers can either adopt or reject. What messages does the key doctrine governing PSOs, *JWP 3-50 The Military Contribution to Peace Support Operations* (Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre 2004), send out about masculinity?

In order to answer this question, it is useful to be able to compare *JWP 3-50* to *JWP 0-01 British Defence Doctrine* (Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre 2001), the doctrine which underpins all military activity, and which highlights what is distinctive about *JWP 3-50* and PSOs. In comparison to *JWP 0-01*, which argues that war-fighting skills and potential remain key to British military's credibility and effectiveness, *JWP 3-50* emphasises the conflict resolution practices that are essential for a successful PSO. *JWP 0-01* champions the "warfighting ethos" (soldiers must be prepared to fight and die) and the "maneuverist approach," (where the emphasis is on the defeat and disruption of the enemy by applying constant and unacceptable pressure), whilst *JWP 3-50* outlines the tasks and techniques of a PSO. As discussed in the previous chapter, these tasks and techniques are organised into four main categories: Campaign Authority Promotion; Operational Control; Interim Management and measures which have a combination of the first three aims, and there are clear overlaps with the techniques and principles of conflict resolution theory and practice in all four categories. Similarly, while *JWP 0-01* focuses on the principles of war – selection and maintenance of aim, maintenance of morale, offensive action, security, surprise, concentration of force, economy of effort, flexibility, co-operation and sustainability – *JWP 3-50* focuses on the "fundamentals and principles" of PSOs – creating, sustaining and enhancing campaign authority, credible and reasonable force, perseverance, comprehensive

and complementary campaigning, preventative action, sensitised action, security and transparency.

I argue that throughout *JWP 3-50*, there is an attempt to position these conflict resolution practices as masculine. Masculinisation can involve the linkage of practices to terms which are conventionally associated with masculinity; the privileging or valorisation of practices; the linkage of practices to men's bodies; and the feminisation of alternative practices. Masculinisation is most successful when a combination of these strategies are involved – in and of itself, the privileging of a practice as more superior in some way would rarely suffice as making something more manly (see chapter four).

In *JWP 3-50*, under the heading of Campaign Authority Promotion, we see consent promotion techniques such as the communication skills of negotiation and mediation being presented as a crucial part of soldier practice. Negotiation and mediation takes up five and half pages in the 30 page long chapter on Tasks and Techniques, when every other skill is discussed in either a page or a paragraph. It is described as being about building positive relations and creating mutual respect and co-operation necessary for the successful resolution of the conflict.⁴⁰ These communication or consent building practices are not only portrayed as the most effective, intelligent and rational strategy for soldiers in *JWP 3-50*; they are also described in particular ways which serve to link them to masculinity. For example, in emphasising the importance of winning hearts and minds, *JWP 3-50* states “Through training and long periods of engagement in PSO, United Kingdom Armed Forces have a well developed ability to forge the required levels of contact with the local populace.” Whilst primarily being a comment about the UK's experience of PSO style operations, this is an interesting choice of words to describe communication skills. Communication here is about “forging the required levels of contact,” which can be contrasted with other ways of describing communication that present it as a more consensual democratic project. Betts Fetherston, for example, who has written widely on peacekeeping and conflict resolution theory, outlines her perception of what is required on a PSO in terms of contact with the local population: “negotiation, mediation, cross-cultural interaction, conflict situation fact finding and analysis, empathy, sense of timing and appropriateness, trust and credibility development, listening, active listening, communication, crisis management, imagination,

⁴⁰ JWP 3-50 Paragraph 509

etc.” (Betts Fetherston 1994: 1). Although most of these skills and practices are mentioned in *JWP 3-50*, there is not one mention of ‘listening’, ‘active listening’ or ‘empathy’ in the document. *JWP 3-50* also states that the negotiations should be “created, controlled, and fostered at every level by the PSF [Peace Support Force],” which reinforces this portrayal of communication as something which is controlled by one side. Although communication skills such as negotiation and mediation are privileged in *JWP 3-50*, then, it is a particular masculine type of communication where the emphasis is on telling others what to do, or what is expected of them, rather than what might be described as a more democratic two-directional communication. Communication has more of a focus on getting information across, or on striking a bargain in negotiations, and less on listening and empathising. Both the privileging and the linking to control serve to position such communication techniques as masculine.

In terms of the second category of tasks and techniques on PSOs, “Operational Control,” the emphasis throughout *JWP 3-50* is in presenting control over the use of force and the ability to achieve campaign authority through alternative means as the most masculine approach on PSOs. This is significant because the ability to use force is one of the defining features of traditional military practice, and traditional definitions of military masculinity. It is achieved by portraying control over the use of force as the superior strategy and by linking it to terms that have long been associated with masculinity. The ability to resolve issues without resorting to use of force is explicitly labelled a superior strategy:

Campaign authority can be further promoted if it can be shown to the parties that their status and authority will increase if they show themselves able to resolve issues without resort to violence.⁴¹

JWP 3-50 thus positions the ability to resolve a situation without resorting to force as a skill that only the best can do. Negotiation becomes the real skill and use of force becomes an inferior tactic. To draw an analogy with football, it is as if the fastest, most skilful players have become the heroes and more inspiring than the ones who are depicted as a ‘hard man’ with a crunching tackle. Moreover, the non-use of force is positioned as central to Campaign

⁴¹ *JWP 3-50* Paragraph 508

Authority Promotion – held to be the key to successful PSOs in *JWP 3-50*. It is clear that campaign authority is not to be achieved by force, but by winning the respect of others.

All actors in the PSO Complex must be encouraged to understand and fulfil their role in enhancing the level of Campaign Authority. This is achieved by maintaining the highest possible standards of professionalism, compassion and regard for the higher aims of the campaign, both on and off duty.⁴²

The linking of Campaign Authority to the “higher aims of the campaign,” the resolution or cessation of the conflict, and “compassion” in particular, indicates it is not to be achieved by force. The superior way of soldiering indicated in *JWP 3-50* is to limit or control the use of force and to win over “hearts and minds.” Furthermore, in the paragraph relating to incident management,⁴³ control over the use of force is recommended at each stage and every effort is made to resolve the conflict through negotiation rather than force. It is clear from this depiction of incident management that the key skills and practices involved are intelligence and an understanding of the situation, the ability to negotiate and communicate, and the ability to avoid or limit of the use of force. This can also be seen when *JWP 3-50* sets out the importance of the moderation of available force

To implement and uphold the terms of the internationally agreed mandate, a PSF must moderate the use of available force to achieve the desired effect without detriment to Campaign Authority. Force must be credible and used in a manner that is reasonable to achieve the mandated outcomes or desired effect. The action should be proportional and discriminatory, such that it is confined in effect to the intended target. Moderation of the force used will be achieved through the terms of the mandate, observance of international, domestic and host nation law where it exists, and through commanders’ and nationally imposed rules of engagement. Controlled, and with a clear focus upon all aspects of the effects achieved, a military force should act to enhance the Campaign Authority and hence promote and enable the realisation of the long term strategic goals set down in the mandate.⁴⁴

⁴² JWP 3-50 Paragraph 306

⁴³ JWP 3-50 Paragraph 532

⁴⁴ JWP 3-50 Paragraph 308; Also see Paragraph 321

The key words in this definition are “moderate,” “credible,” “proportional,” “reasonable” “discriminatory,” “confined,” “moderation,” and “controlled.” Many of these terms have long been associated with masculinity, and contrasted with the uncontrollable, irrational feminine. This definition thus not only serves to highlight the effectiveness of non-use of force on PSOs, but also links it to masculinity.

The third category of tasks and techniques in *JWP 3-50* is Interim Management, including such tasks as demobilisation, disarmament and re-integration (DDR), electoral process support and human rights activity. *JWP 3-50* is careful to insist that most of these tasks should be led by the appropriate specialist civilian agency, whether that be the Department for International Development (DFID) for reconstruction,⁴⁵ or the Red Cross for humanitarian aid;⁴⁶ the military will only be involved if the security situation requires it. This very formulation arguably serves to position the fulfilment of these activities as masculine – the idea that they are so dangerous and risky to fulfil that, at times, only the military can attempt them, serves to position the military as the superior organisation, and both the military and the activities as masculine.

Recruitment and Training Material: “Be the Best”

Another source of British Army discourse on PSOs is the recruitment material used to attract soldiers into the Army. In its portrayal of the variety of operations a soldier may be involved in, recruitment material sends messages about both PSOs and masculinity to the reader, through a combination of text and images. In general in recent years, British Army recruitment material has focused less on the fundamental purpose of the Army and more on the opportunities it offers young people. The overriding message of the recruitment material is to emphasise that soldiering offers action, adventure, variety, considerable career opportunities, friendship and sport. There is thus little overt presentation of the messages of traditional military masculinity, that soldiering is about combat, fighting and dying for one’s country; nor is there a complete break from this image. If we subject the representations of Army life to close scrutiny, looking for strategies of masculinisation and feminisation as before, we can see that, as with *JWP 3-50*, there is evidence of PSOs being portrayed as masculine.

⁴⁵ *JWP 3-50* Paragraph 557

⁴⁶ *JWP 3-50* Paragraph 555

In an Army “Be the Best” general recruiting leaflet from 2005, action and adventure are emphasised, but rather than being solely associated with combat, they are linked to PSOs in various ways (see image 6.1).



Image 6.1: “Action and Adventure,” Army “Be the Best” General Recruitment Leaflet⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, March 2005 (RG/LEA/302 March 2005)

Under the heading Adventure, with its accompanying masculine picture of a soldier shouting aggressively and pointing his weapon towards the viewer, we find “peacekeeping in Afghanistan” and “street patrolling in Kosovo” included as two of the activities. Under the heading Action, with its accompanying picture of a male soldier hanging off a cliff while rock-climbing, we find “bridge building” and “life saving.” The picture on the back of the leaflet is of a male soldier, in desert camouflage gear, sharing a joke with a group of five Iraqi civilians, male and female. The soldier appears masculine in his uniform and pose, and yet his role is presented as communicating with the locals, building relationships and consent. Inside the leaflet, there is another picture of a male soldier, again in camouflage gear and with an authoritative pose, organising what looks like the distribution of aid to civilians in an African country. These wording and pictures in the leaflet serve to make the activities of PSOs central to a soldier’s role and, by virtue of being linked to these masculine headings, bodies and poses, manly activities.

In the Army Careers Guide general brochure, also of 2005, Army careers are divided into eight groups: Combat, Logistics, Healthcare, Specialist, Engineer, IT/Comms and HR/Admin and Finance.⁴⁸ The section for combat soldiers (see image 6.2) is introduced with:

There’s more to being a soldier than fighting. Combat units often have to use their skills to stop other people fighting. In hotspots such as Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, combat units have been key to peacekeeping and restructuring, doing everything from patrolling troubled areas and restoring water supplies to making sure elections are fair. Humanitarian work has never been more important.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by Army Recruiting Group, April 2005 (RG/AGC/002 April 2005)

⁴⁹ Army Careers Guide p.10



Image 6.2: “Combat,” *Army Careers Guide*, p.10⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by Army Recruiting Group, April 2005 (RG/AGC/002 April 2005)

No other tasks or roles are mentioned in this introductory text, although there is mention of the firepower and armour necessary on the battlefield; the emphasis is on PSO tasks, even for combat soldiers. There are several techniques used in order to portray PSOs as masculine. The use of “hotspots” makes the areas seem dangerous and challenging. This text is superimposed on a picture of a silhouetted soldier, in full combat gear, who cuts an impersonal but masculine figure – black against a grey sky – in an active pose. A bullet ridden “Combat” in bold red forms the title to the page. The juxtaposition of these images with the text serves to position PSOs as masculine – a tough job only the toughest could do.

Seven additional brochures have been produced, to cover each aspect of a military career in more detail. Inside the brochure dedicated to Combat roles, from 2004, the introductory section is entitled “A Force for Good” and is subtitled “It’s not just about fighting wars (see image 6.3). The Army keeps the peace in troubled locations and delivers lifesaving aid, It’s not easy... are you up for it?”⁵¹ The text begins “whether it’s fighting a war, keeping the peace in one of the planet’s hotspots or saving lives by delivering aid, the Army is respected worldwide for our ability to fulfil a role no-one else can handle. It’s a tough job – but with your help, we have the resources to tackle it.”⁵² This text is accompanied by a picture of a male soldier in full combat gear, holding a machine gun, holding down barbed wire as a colleague jumps over him; his face is in a grimace, indicating that he is being pushed to the limit.

⁵¹ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, November 2004 (RG/BRO/101 November 2004)

⁵² Combat, p.4

» THE ARMY

A FORCE FOR GOOD

It's not just about fighting wars. The Army keeps the peace in troubled locations and delivers lifesaving aid. It's not easy... are you up for it?

Whether it's fighting a war, keeping the peace in one of the planet's hotspots or saving lives by delivering aid, the Army is respected worldwide for our ability to fulfil a role no one else can handle. It's a tough job – but with your help, we have the resources to tackle it.

No matter what your job, first of all you'll be trained as a soldier. You'll learn how to fight and survive, and be kitted out with the finest equipment, transport and cutting-edge technology, whether that's the hardware to eliminate targets in combat, or the computer power to manage the deployment of troops and their supplies. You'll have the chance to earn qualifications. And you'll know that your job's worth doing.

Every day brings a new challenge – physical or mental – but you won't face it alone. When we work, we work together. From day one you'll be part of a team whose strength comes from the role each individual plays at every level, from your own unit through to the Army as a whole.

There'll be the opportunity to see new countries and try new sports. You'll be living and working with people your age, some with the same roots and some from totally different backgrounds, but who all want to get the most out of life. And whatever your job in the Army, you'll be a professional, a highly-trained expert in your field with responsibility for the safety and security of others. It's a career like no other today.

OFFICER MATERIAL? »

If you think you've got leadership qualities, take a look at our Officer career guide. There's a massive range of job opportunities for Army officers inside. It's available from your local Careers Office.

"I've only been in the Army for two years, but I've made more friends than I can remember, male and female"



4 COMBAT

Image 6.3: "A Force for Good," Combat Brochure, p.4⁵³

⁵³ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, November 2004 (RG/BRO/101 November 2004)

Personal testimonies are used throughout the recruitment brochures in order to attract potential recruits. The testimonies often mention PSOs and how rewarding they are; whereas there is little mention of fighting. In the Combat brochure, the first quote from a soldier's testimony we come across, highlighted in bold at the top of the page, is: "Kosovo was one of the biggest tests, but it brought back why the Army is important. You face your own challenges, but you're helping others into the bargain." The accompanying picture is of two male soldiers, in combat gear, with a tank, and authoritative poses. Again, the suggestion that only the toughest can participate in PSOs, and the accompanying images of male soldiers pushed to the limit, serve to position PSOs as masculine.

Some brochures, such as the one dedicated to the Intelligence Corps actively use PSOs as a recruiting strategy.⁵⁴ As the Intelligence Corps is appealing for people who want to specialise in communication skills and work with local civilians on operations, using "brains not brawn", they are able to draw on examples from PSOs to make such a career look attractive. As we have seen, though, even the brochures dedicated to the combat arms, the home of traditional combat masculinity – hegemonic amongst the British armed forces – emphasise the centrality of PSOs and can be seen to link them to masculinity.

The training material consulted existed of power-point presentations designed to bring *JWP 3-50* to life, illustrating its key themes with images and graphics. The presentations reiterated the portrayal of PSOs as masculine predominantly through the use of masculine images to accompany slides which contain text referring to the conflict resolution practices of PSOs. Thus, for example, alongside the text "Consent promotion; Impartiality, Minimum Use of Force," there is an image of a soldier in silhouette, pointing his weapon in the direction of an airfield full of fighter jets.⁵⁵ It is not obvious what the image has to do with the content of the slide, leading to the assumption that it is not supposed to be a direct illustration of the content. Regardless of the intention, such images send out the message that even on PSOs, soldering remains a masculine activity.

⁵⁴ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, April 2005 (RG/BRO/118 April 2005)

Informal Sources of British Army Doctrine: Autobiographies

The autobiographical reflections of soldiers who have participated in PSOs around the world in the 1990s and 2000s provide further particularly fruitful opportunities to examine the gendered nature of British Army discourse on PSOs. They provide a useful additional perspective to the more official sources of British Army doctrine, by opening up a window to how PSOs are experienced on the ground. The majority of autobiographical reflections detailed below concern operations in Bosnia in the mid 1990s, but some refer to other operations such as Sierra Leone in 2000 and recent tours to Northern Ireland, which since the Good Friday agreement of 1998, have been increasingly akin to PSOs. At the end of the section, I include some of the reflections from more recent autobiographies from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, along with some of the reflections from informal conversations I had with soldiers who had returned from Afghanistan and were involved in training others who were about to deploy there. Although these operations are not simple PSOs, soldiers' reflections on the PSO elements of these multi-dimensional operations are relevant to exploring Army discourse on PSOs. I suggest that in these unofficial sources, there is also evidence of PSOs being positioned as masculine.

A theme throughout many of the autobiographical accounts of PSOs in the 1990s is that of describing PSOs as tougher, more challenging and more complex than traditional war fighting, with particular attention paid to the variety of roles (sometimes contradictory) a soldier is expected to carry out. This positions PSOs as masculine, both through the linkage to terms which have long been associated with masculinity such as tough and hard, and through their positioning as the more difficult challenge. General Sir Michael Rose, commander of UNPROFOR troops in Bosnia from 1994-5, for example, argues in his reflections that the experiences of Bosnia and Somalia show peacekeeping to be "at the tougher end of a range of military activities" (Rose 1998: 11). Indeed, Rose argues that, due to the way in which commanders in PSOs cannot always retain the initiative, "Command of a peacekeeping mission is infinitely more challenging" (Rose 1998: 163). When frustrated with the difficulties of negotiating with the various Bosnian leaders, he again makes the point that "war is a lot easier than peace-keeping" (Rose 1998: 279). Summing up the qualities necessary for peacekeeping, he comments on the troops under his command:

⁵⁵ Powerpoint presentation, "International Peace Support Briefing Programme," Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, obtained on field trip to Warminster, May 15 2006

They came as peacekeepers whose purpose was to alleviate the suffering of all the peoples of the Balkans and to try, through peaceful means, to bring about an end to the war. This demanded of them the same fighting qualities that soldiers need in battle: guile, courage, determination and endurance; but, without the clarity of purpose of a war, perhaps peacekeeping demanded more of them than fighting ever did (Rose 1998: 4).

The argument that peacekeeping demands the same fighting qualities that soldiers need in battle, along with the statements that peacekeeping is more demanding and challenging, serves to position PSOs as masculine. Indeed, Rose's language throughout his autobiography indicates that PSOs are not a less manly operation. He portrays himself as decisive, assertive, action-oriented, arguing that he was determined to demonstrate, for example, a "more robust UN approach to peacekeeping" (Rose 1998: 53) and a more "hardline tactic with regard to enforcing the passage of convoys throughout Bosnia" (Rose 1998: 57). Indeed, Rose is frustrated with critics who allege that peacekeeping is easier, less challenging or a "softer" experience (Rose 1998: 211-2).

UN peacekeeping, which is the approach Rose favours, is contrasted throughout his account to the NATO approach to the conflict in Bosnia, which favoured using air power in order to try and repel the Serbs. Rose is constantly trying to demonstrate that his approach is superior, and a crucial tactic in this regard is to position peacekeeping as masculine. When NATO Admiral Leighton Smith, who has been advocating more air power and disparaging the peacekeeping efforts, rants 'Plinking tanks is not warfighting!' Rose replies 'No, Admiral, we're asking you to do this the hard way.'⁵⁶ Rose also recounts an episode where NATO Admiral Leighton Smith, is with him as they are prevented from passing by heavily armed Serbs. Here he links peacekeeping to overcoming situations of danger, another traditionally masculine practice: "It was a useful demonstration to him [Leighton-Smith] that in Bosnia, operating on the ground was a lot more dangerous than flying a jet in conditions of air superiority. Peacekeepers had to deal with potentially uncontrollable situations every day of their lives" (Rose 1998: 258-9).

⁵⁶ This argument is documented not in Rose's autobiography, but in his colleague Stankovic's (Stankovic 2000: 323)

As well as being described as more challenging, tougher, harder and more dangerous, PSOs are privileged in many of the autobiographies by being held up as more satisfying. Mike Curtis, for example, an SAS soldier with experience in the Falklands, the Gulf War and Northern Ireland, notes a real sense of achievement when it came to operating as part of the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia:

Our exercise to map the front lines had triggered a genuine dialogue between rival commanders and an agreement that might ease the tension and save lives. The satisfaction I felt was enormous... What began as a process of a few UK Special Forces guys mapping the front line for the UN had provided an opportunity for opposing troops to make decisions and reach agreements that would prevent casualties and perhaps pave the way for peace. It was a far cry from the usual cut and thrust, blood and guts activities of the SAS (Curtis 1997: 465, 467)

Here the traditionally masculine activities of the SAS are discounted almost disparagingly, compared to the practices of PSOs, which are portrayed as if they have a more meaningful and long-lasting impact, and are therefore more rewarding.

Looking more closely at the particular practices outlined in *JWP 3-50* as central to PSOs, we find similar attempts to portray them as masculine. One way in which Campaign Authority tasks, such as negotiation and mediation, are portrayed as masculine is through describing them as being things which demand strength and aggression, or at least “force of personality” (Stewart 1994: 319). Rather than an alternative to force, in many examples in the accounts, negotiation involves being able to seize and shove local belligerents, to stand up for yourself physically, and to dominate (see for example Rose 1998: 73). It is also portrayed as an elaborate game (Curtis 1997: 461; Duncan 1994: 16), where all sides know the rules, but test each other’s nerve, evoking ‘masculine’ games of bluff and brinkmanship such as poker. Describing his reactions to a Croat roadblock in Bosnia, Stewart explains:

I told the Croats that we were to pass and a heated discussion then took place. The Croat officer stated that we had no special rights to pass through his checkpoint, and I immediately sprang to the attack. As I had already discovered, in these confrontations you had to take a very firm line and a lot of bombast, noise and aggression often paid dividends. I always deliberately gave the impression that I was on the verge of walking back to my vehicle

and driving across regardless of what was said.... I was determined we would not be stopped at checkpoints under any circumstances, but at the same time realized that I did not have the power to force my way through. Negotiating checkpoints in Bosnia was always a gamble, which consisted of a combination of bluff, determination and good luck (Stewart 1994: 69-70)

Stewart, who was a commanding officer in Bosnia in 1992-3, articulates the way in which for him, negotiation was a masculine activity. He associates it with springing on the attack, taking a firm line, utilising bombast, noise and aggression, and employing a game of bluff. Many of the authors also link the practices of communication and negotiation to bravery, drawing attention to the way in which soldiers would travel Bosnia in soft-skinned vehicles, often under fire, in order to continue this vital work, thus further cementing the association with masculinity (see for example Duncan 1994: 13). In such discursive links, it is notable that mediation and negotiation are of a specific kind. As with the positioning of communication in *JWP 3-50*, what is not being portrayed here is an open and trusting process of communication, demanding listening, compromise and empathy. Arguably, one of the ways in which communication and consent-building techniques are made masculine is by linking them to a tough, aggressive, brave non-compromising approach.

On the other hand, this is not the only way in which negotiation and mediation are portrayed in the soldiers' reflections on PSOs in the 1990s. Sometimes communication is not linked to toughness and aggression, but is much more to do with building relationships. Arguably, however, in these discursive links, negotiation is still being masculinized as it is positioned as the superior soldiering strategy. For example, many of the soldiers describe the importance of building informal links with local commanders, by drinking coffee and discussing the state of play. Colonel Duncan commends the tactics of his soldiers at roadblocks: "The boys got used to chatting them up. If you brandish a couple of cigarettes and a large cup of steaming hot coffee, it's a bit of an invitation and you chat up the local militia" (Duncan 1994: 18). Similarly, Stewart notes the significance of dinner nights for achieving breakthroughs with local commanders (Stewart 1994: 140). The sexual innuendo present in the use of such analogies as "chatting them up" and "dinner nights" is presumably not intended, but it highlights that practices of communication are traditionally linked to femininity, and not to communication between soldiers. As such, it is only through linking them to their effectiveness in achieving the aims of the PSO that such strategies can be made masculine. For example, General Rose writes:

When we crossed the conflict line leaving Sarajevo we would have to pass through both Serbian and Bosnian checkpoints, and I insisted that we got out our vehicles and spent time talking to the soldiers manning them. It was far better to sit with them in their bunkers drinking coffee and discussing the current situation than to stare at them from behind armoured glass. When we first started to tour the countryside, we got mixed reactions from the soldiers we met; sometimes they were threatening, sometimes welcoming. By the end of the year we had got to know some of the soldiers manning the checkpoints so well that even when their bosses had ordered them to block our movements, they would let us past (Rose 1998: 106-7).

Rose positions his strategy of talking and drinking coffee as the more superior by arguing that it eventually resulted in them being able to travel around the Balkans unhindered. More explicitly, he argues that it was “far better to sit with [the local soldiers] in their bunkers drinking coffee and discussing the current situation than to stare at them from behind armoured glass.” This has the effect of making traditional strategies associated with combat, such as the protection of armoured glass, seem inferior and feminised – a failure to face up to the “sometimes threatening” local soldiers and to achieve the goals of the mission.

Woolley’s account of his time in Bosnia details many conversations over coffee with both local commanders and civilians, and he describes an almost identical approach to Rose:

I often felt uncomfortable in such situations because in some respects we were being far from professional, and yet sitting in the Scimitars for twenty-four hours was not only unpleasant but completely unnecessary. As previously stated, to have done so would have prevented us from meeting the locals, showing them we were human, building friendships, gleaning information, or at least moods, and demonstrating to them that we were not scared of their environment. To batten down with helmets and flak jackets donned would have been counter-productive. It makes soldiers vulnerable, subjects of ridicule, and might have created ill-feeling, the sort of false professionalism I would expect from armies who do not have the same experience of ‘hearts and minds’, but simply maximise ‘force protection’ (Woolley 2004: 154).

Woolley thus links the practice of drinking coffee and chatting with locals to masculinity in a variety of ways. Although he notes that such communicative practices are a departure from

his training and understanding of soldiering (the fear of being “far from professional”), he links them to masculine terms, such as bravery (“demonstrating to them we were not scared”), and presents them as superior, forming the most effective strategy. Moreover, much more explicitly than Rose, Woolley feminizes the approach associated with combat and war, through linking it to vulnerability, loss of face, and “false professionalism,” and putting inverted commas around “force protection” as if it were something to be mocked. This is somewhat bizarre, as Woolley spends much of his account emphasising how for him soldiering is all about the practices associated with combat, such as force protection, but it goes to demonstrate the tension that exists in many of the soldiers accounts. It is not that some embrace or enact peacekeeper masculinity and others enact combat masculinity. Rather, all soldiers’ accounts demonstrate a tension, positioning PSOs as at times more masculine, and at other times, emasculating. In this example, it is perhaps because drinking coffee and chatting are so far removed from traditional understandings of what soldiering is about, that many of soldiers put so much effort into positioning them as masculine.

For Collins, too, winning the hearts and minds of civilians, which also demands good communication skills, is a crucial strategy on PSOs. Commenting on a 2001 tour to Northern Ireland, where the tasks were much more akin to PSOs than counter-terrorism or combat:

The lesson we had learned above all was that operations such as the one we had just conducted in East Tyrone could not hope to be successful if you did not seek to harness the good will of the local population. That was where we expended ninety per cent of our efforts...

In my view the key to success was to establish your humanity and then take every opportunity to reinforce that. That meant not being too uniform. We wanted the public to recognise individuals. Where possible the men wore caubeens [soft, beret style hats worn by Irish regiments] rather than helmets to make them recognisable. I constantly encouraged them to engage in the public in conversation during their duties and to get to know the locals...

It was clear that winning the hearts and minds of the local communities and thereby isolating those who chose the path of violence was more valuable than ammunition. It was a lesson that we would take with us and apply elsewhere (Collins 2005: 76).

The way Collins presents winning hearts and minds through “establishing humanity” and “engaging the public in conversation” and “getting to know the locals” as “more valuable than ammunition,” indicates both that communication is a superior strategy to the use of force and that, for him, communication is a more democratic, humble strategy than some of the examples above.

The second category of tasks and techniques in *JWP 3-50* is “Operational Control” and, as we saw, what is highlighted is the ability to control situations without resorting to violence. This skill, despite the strong links between combat and soldiering in traditional military masculinities, is one which is portrayed as masculine in many of the autobiographical accounts of PSOs in the 1990s. Again, this is achieved through a variety of discursive strategies: through linking non-use of force to terms traditionally associated with masculinity, through demonstrating it to be the superior strategy, and through feminizing alternatives.

For example, Colonel Alistair Duncan discusses the reaction to his interpreter being killed. Some of his soldiers are convinced something must be done, but he argues:

[R]evenge is not the course of action of a civilised man; we must keep careful control of the way people behave and we must be seen to be impartial, actively impartial (Duncan 1994)

Here, Duncan is keen to assert that control and restraint over the use of force is more masculine than using force, which is associated with what the Bosnians do, as out-of-control and irrational. He maintains that finding alternatives to force is the superior, more intelligent and rational strategy:

Military force is a very blunt instrument... Once used, force cannot be taken back and there are always ramifications. If those ramifications have not been thought through carefully and in depth, then there could well be big trouble. In general, I found that a short term solution gave me a long term problem. For example, if I smashed through a road barrier with a Warrior (easy to do) I would not get through the next day. But negotiation through that same barrier could get us through for the next few weeks (Duncan 1994: 16).

His brief, bracketed note that smashing through a road barrier with a Warrior would be “easy to do” serves to position the use of force as the weaker, inferior, feminised strategy, in comparison to negotiation. Such feminisation of the practices associated with combat and war can also be seen throughout the accounts of both Rose and Stankovic, who are dismissive and sarcastic about NATO’s approach to resolving the conflict in Bosnia through the use of air power. We have already noted Rose’s attempts to position UN Peacekeeping as more masculine than NATO’s approach through asserting how dangerous and risky it is for the peacekeepers on the ground. He is also scathing about the masculinity of those who would use more force, the NATO commanders and pilots:

The UN was beginning to be rather sceptical about the capabilities of NATO aircraft. They could not engage our targets in cloud, in rain, at night, or with the sun in their eyes. They were beginning to sound like British Rail (Rose 1998: 262).

Commenting on the use of NATO jets to bomb Serb targets in support of UN peacekeepers, Stankovic writes:

Those jets really pissed us off. Zipping around making pretty patterns in the sky and then back to Italy and their five star hotels to slap each other on the back for a job well done protecting the UN on the ground. Hardly the case. When we called on them for a bit of Close Air Support, i.e. hitting a specific target like a tank or whatever was violating the Total Exclusion Zones, either they couldn’t acquire the target, or when they did they missed (Stankovic 2000: 322).

The pilots are portrayed as ineffective, and as not helping the peacekeepers achieve their overall aims. Crucially, they are also feminised by being referred to as “precious,” making “pretty patterns” in the sky and cowardly, retreating to safety by flying back to their Italian base as quickly as possible. These are not terms commonly used to describe pilots, and are used by Stankovic as a deliberate attempt to position the more combative NATO strategy as inferior to the UN peacekeeping strategy by using gender. Of course, there is a long history of rivalry between different branches of the military, with soldiers often deriding airmen in gendered terms. Here it is noteworthy that, for Rose and Stankovic, even when peacekeeping, soldiers are more masculine than pilots engaging in war fighting. Stankovic

recounts Rose's reaction to the NATO decision to suspend flying operations over Bosnia after being illuminated by some Serb tracking radar: "Too dangerous to fly below 5,000 feet they'd claimed. When the General heard that one he flipped his lid: 'Too dangerous to fly under five thousand feet!' He raged. 'We fucking well live below five thousand feet'" (Stankovic 2000: 322).

The third category of activities on a PSO, according to *JWP 3-50*, is those that fall under the rubric of "Interim Management," including DDR, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction. These humanitarian activities are also linked to masculinity, again through a variety of strategies. One is through being characterised as demanding, important and fulfilling, a theme which can be discerned in all the autobiographical accounts. Rose links humanitarian activities to heroism, a classic signifier of military masculinity:

The story of the young peacekeepers in UNPROFOR is a story of heroism and commitment to the people of Bosnia. While the headlines in the newspapers screamed about bloodshed, the peacekeepers and aid workers quietly went about saving lives (Rose 1998: 317-8).

He also links humanitarian activities to bravery and courage, also archetypal masculine traits, again particularly associated with military masculinities:

But in peacekeeping, as in war, risks have to be taken and it probably takes more courage for peacekeepers to venture into hostile territory armed only with a conviction that they are morally right, than it does for armed soldiers to do the same. The reward for taking such risks is likely to be great, as the people of Gorazde were to discover; the arrival of the first UN convoys into their town not only brought food and other medical supplies but also gave them hope of survival" (Rose 1998: 176).

Reversing the traditional association of war fighting with risk, bravery and courage, Rose contends that it is in fact peacekeeping that requires more courage, thus positioning humanitarian activities as masculine.

Also in evidence in some of the autobiographical accounts is a passionate resistance to the belief that, because they include humanitarian activities, PSOs must be easier than war.

Stankovic for example, reports this episode from his leave:

I spent a lot of time in the pub listening to stupid conversations about football scores or whatever. It bored me. On one occasion I met some mates from the regiment in the pub. ‘Oh yeah, it’s not a real war. Not like the Falklands. You’re not fighting anyone. All you’re doing is escorting aid convoys!’ That’s the sort of stuff they’d come out with. It really irritated me. What did they know? You couldn’t tell them though. You couldn’t tell them that in a way it was worse... (Stankovic 2000: 189).

When faced with the assertion that “all you’re doing is escorting aid convoys,” not “fighting anyone,” Stankovic is very annoyed. He is keen to present the humanitarian activities of his time in the Balkans – which extended from escorting aid to human rights protection and helping families escape the fighting – as both hugely demanding and rewarding. This resistance to the feminisation of PSOs helps position them as masculine.

In autobiographical reflections on the operations of the post 9/11 period in Afghanistan and Iraq, which, as we have noted in the previous chapters, are perhaps best characterised as multi-dimensional: as including a PSO element in their aims and tasks, but also including the requirement to use force against those that see them as the enemy, there is much less evidence of PSOs being linked to masculinity. This is partly because the PSO elements are not mentioned much at all; they do not form the central focus of the reflections, as they do in the accounts from PSOs in the Balkans. The combat element of operations dominates the narratives and PSO elements are a side issue. It is perhaps the case that when fighting is always an option, soldiers do not *have* to portray PSOs as masculine: there is ample opportunity to demonstrate the masculinity of their role in the accounts of combat. Nonetheless, there are some examples of reflections on the PSO element of these operations, however, and in these reflections, the attempt to position PSOs as masculine. For example, McLaughlin recounts his thoughts and fears on being called up for peacekeeping duty in Iraq.

Admittedly, it wasn’t an all-out war that we would be facing, but peacekeeping in a hostile region could present equal or even greater dangers. At least in wartime you could blast away at the

enemy whenever you saw them, but as peacekeepers we would have to stick to strict rules of engagement and have eyes in the back of our heads (McLaughlin 2007: 139).

Here, McLaughlin reinforces the theme of the Bosnian autobiographies that PSOs can be more challenging than war, which positions them as masculine. Also portraying the PSO elements of these multi-dimensional operations as a challenge is Leo Docherty, who is thrilled at the opportunity to go to Afghanistan in 2006, on what he describes as the “cutting-edge project” of nation-building (Docherty 2007: 48):

Despite not knowing any details, I’m drawn to the idea of going to the Pashtun south of Afghanistan and intrigued by the intent: ‘nation-building’ sounds fascinating and very honourable. I imagine myself speaking Pashtu and cutting deals with Pashtun tribal elders while drinking tea in the Hindu Kush. What an awesome prospect! (Docherty 2007: 45).

The linkage of nation-building with honour positions it as a masculine activity, and Docherty continues throughout his account to envision himself as a new Great Game player, “serving NATO, not the Empire” (Docherty 2007: 48).

Training Fieldtrips

The sentiment that PSOs are harder than war was echoed by some of the soldiers I spoke to who had returned from Afghanistan and who were training Marines to deploy there in 2006. One Colour Sergeant reflected on his previous tour of Afghanistan: “It’s much harder on PSOs – war is much easier – you just go out and kill them. Now we have to be everything... aid deliverers, social workers...”⁵⁷ There was general agreement that the “hearts and minds stuff” is harder than the combat for which they train. There was also some acknowledgement that it could also be more rewarding, another way that PSOs are positioned as superior. The same soldier, for example, also told a story about having to help a heavily pregnant woman deliver her baby safely in a remote area of Afghanistan; the

⁵⁷ Informal focus group with 8 Colour Sergeants, held at RM Condor, Arbroath, during OPTAG Training for Royal Marines to deploy to Afghanistan on Operations HARRICK, 9-12 May 2006.

domestic nature of this task could not be further from the archetypal soldier's role but he argued that this achievement "will stay with the boys for the rest of their lives."⁵⁸

This discourse constructing PSO practices as masculine can be interpreted as constructing a new model of military masculinity, "peacekeeper masculinity." Soldiers linking PSOs to masculinity are involved – consciously or not – in deconstructing the link between combat and masculinity and redefining masculinity in alternative ways (see figure 6.1).⁵⁹

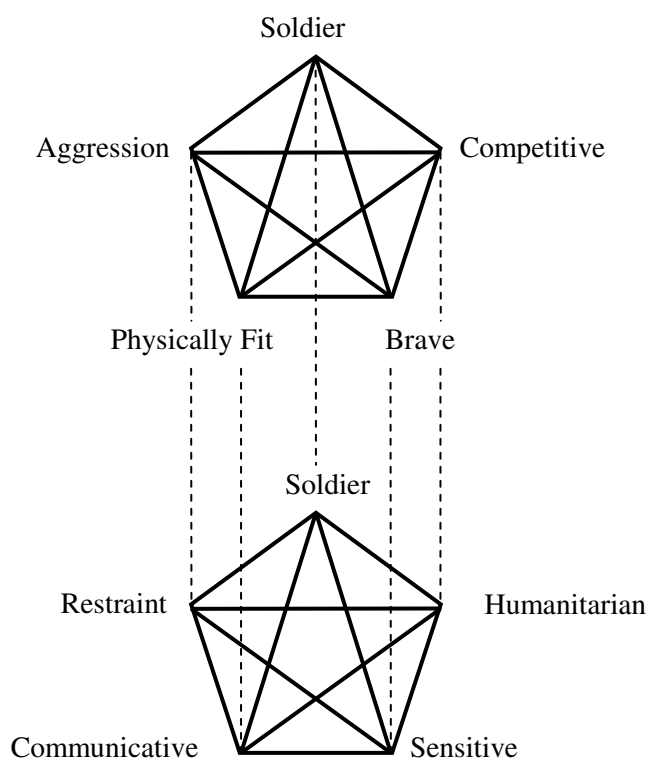


Figure 6.1: New Linkages and Differentiations: the Construction of Peacekeeper Masculinity

⁵⁸ Informal focus group with 8 Colour Sergeants, held at RM Condor, Arbroath, during OPTAG Training for Royal Marines to deploy to Afghanistan on Operations Harrick, 9-12 May 2006.

⁵⁹ The model implies a rigidity which is not accurate when it comes to real men living their lives. It also only captures some of the aspects of peacekeeper masculinity. Yet it gets across the idea of the new linkages and differentiations which combine to produce the model of peacekeeper masculinity.

II: Peacekeeper Masculinity as Emasculating

It is clear, however, that the discourse constructing PSOs as masculine is not the only one running through the master discourse of PSOs. There is another discourse which can be identified, which constructs PSOs and the practices of “Campaign Authority Promotion”, “Operational Control” and “Interim Management” as frustrating and emasculating. In this discourse, we see PSOs and their associated practices being feminised and the traditional practices of combat and war masculinised. As such, this second discourse reinforces the hegemony of combat masculinity and traditional links between soldiering, masculinity and war. Again, it runs through both official and unofficial sources of British Army discourse.

JWP 3-50 Revisited: Revealing the Tensions

Although *JWP 3-50* can be read as a doctrine which presents the practices of PSOs as masculine, and thus contributes to the construction of peacekeeper masculinity, it is not without its tensions. The most significant, and the one which most strikingly illustrates the second discourse, that PSOs are emasculating, is the inclusion of a summary of British Defence Doctrine (BDD) as an Annex to *JWP 3-50*. Thus, despite devoting 102 pages to outlining the context and appropriate principles, tasks and techniques for a PSO, with the clear connection to conflict resolution practices, *JWP 3-50* then states that all military action across the spectrum of tension (war fighting to peace support operations) is to be guided by the fundamentals of BDD.

As noted above in our comparison of *JWP 0-01* and *JWP 3-50*, BDD focuses on the need to prepare for, to fight and win in war as “the most important function” of the Armed Forces: “Every member of the Armed Forces must be prepared to fight and die for what ever legitimate cause the UK is pursuing through military endeavour.” As such, warfighting techniques such as “creating fear in the minds of opposing forces and factions” and producing “massive uncertainty, confusion, chaos, and an inevitable abandonment of initial plans” through “dynamic and destructive” exchanges, are required. Practices and skills associated with combat masculinity are emphasised: “courage,” “leadership,” “cohesion,” “discipline” and “confronting risk and managing it”. The message is that it is the warfighting ethos and traditional military masculinity which enables the British army to be effective on PSOs. For example, *JWP 3-50* notes: “Retention of a war fighting ethos is

central, ready to be applied if the circumstances demand it. In PSOs, it is the key characteristic that gives the UK's Armed Forces the ability and credibility to establish a base of influence from which both they and other agencies can operate.”⁶⁰ The repeated assertions in *JWP 3-50* that it is BDD which is the approach which underpins all military activity, and that retention of the war-fighting ethos is central, work to position PSOs as inferior to war.

Recruitment and Training Material Revisited: Reinforcing Combat Masculinity

As with *JWP 3-50*, despite the many linkages between PSOs and masculinity in Army recruitment material, there are images and phrases that continue to portray combat as ‘real soldiering’ and the most masculine activity. For example, the aforementioned Army “Be the Best” leaflet has as its front-page image a bullet ridden caption, eleven male soldiers in full combat gear, facing the camera as if on attack, with a tank looming up behind them (see image 6.4).

⁶⁰ JWP 3-50 Paragraph C25

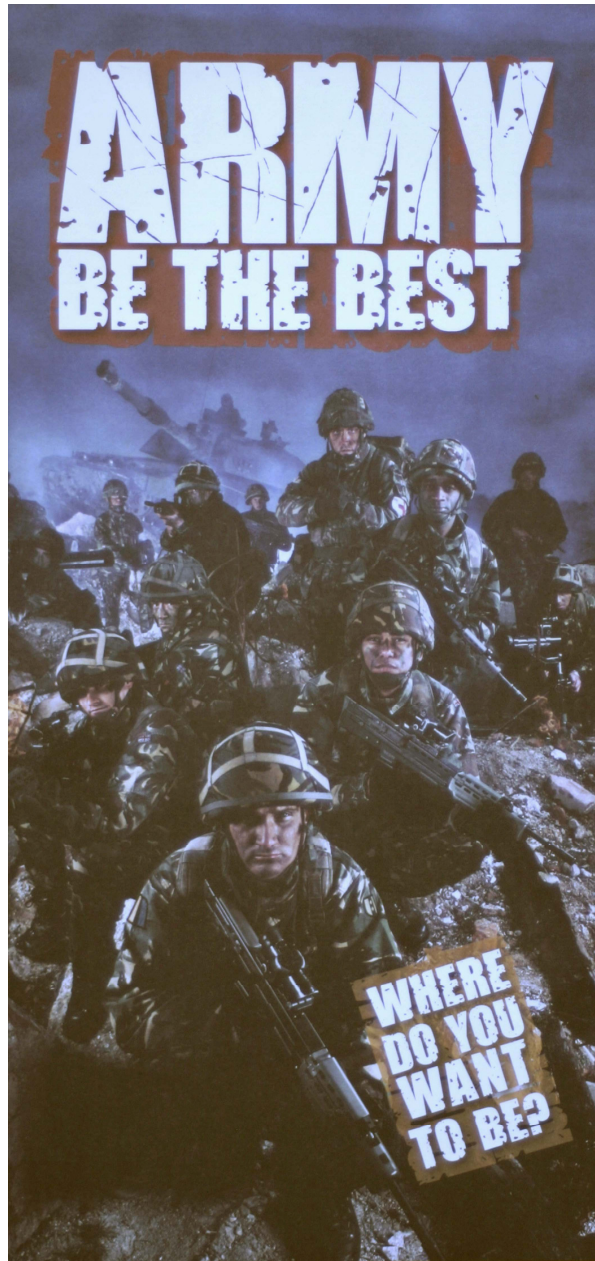


Image 6.4: “Be the Best” General Recruitment Leaflet⁶¹

⁶¹ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, March 2005 (RG/LEA/302 March 2005)

Many are pointing their weapons; all are with grim expressions, and a serious intent. The other three pictures inside show a soldier in an aggressive pose, shouting and pointing his weapon at the camera; a male soldier rock climbing; and male soldiers playing football. In the Combat brochure, the majority of the photos are masculine and emphasise fighting, weaponry, tanks, helicopters and other military hardware.⁶² Even in the Intelligence Corps brochure, which as we noted was the brochure most likely to position PSOs as challenging and rewarding, there are testimonies which say that the most satisfying and challenging job was in the war-fighting phase in Iraq because it involved “putting everything into practice in real-time war scenario.”⁶³ All these images could be said to reinforce the traditional link between soldiering, masculinity and combat.

This message is reflected in the training policy of the British army, which is that if you train for warfighting, you will be equipped for PSOs. This policy positions PSOs as easier and therefore inferior to warfighting. The Ministry of Defence’s position is that “Training recognises, from the outset, the requirement to operate in a range of environments from high intensity warfare to peace support operations” (Ministry of Defence 2004: 5), a formulation which arguably positions war as more challenging than PSOs. Similarly, the power-point presentations used in training for PSOs make it clear that such training is based on the assumptions that “warfighting skills are the foundation” and that the trainer’s role is “adapting from foundation to training for other operations.”⁶⁴ Again, the implication is that PSOs are easier and secondary to the “real” job of soldiers.

Autobiographies Revisited: the Tensions Intensify

The discourse that PSOs are emasculating and inferior to the real business of fighting wars can also be found in the soldiers’ autobiographical reflections on PSOs. Interestingly, these reflections are found in the accounts of the same soldiers that also positioned PSOs as masculine, suggesting that rather than a situation whereby some soldiers are choosing to enact peacekeeper masculinity while others remain wedded to combat masculinity, there is a

⁶² Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, November 2004 (RG/BRO/101 November 2004)

⁶³ Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, April 2005 (RG/BRO/118 April 2005)

⁶⁴ Powerpoint presentation, “OPTAG Brief”, obtained on field trip to Warminster, May 15 2006

tension felt by all the soldiers in their reflections on PSOs as to whether to represent them as masculine or emasculating.⁶⁵

This tension notwithstanding, prominent in the autobiographies is finding the non- or limited-use of force in particular frustrating and emasculating. Noting the barrage of weaponry that had been thrown at British soldiers in Northern Ireland over a particularly tense period between June and October 2001, for example, and the “amazing restraint” shown by the British soldiers in response, Collins comments: “Had it been left to me and the technology existed, I would have favoured belt-fed guns firing thousands of the things” (Collins 2005: 65-6). Similarly, Woolley expresses his frustration at the practice of not returning fire when the British Army escorts of humanitarian aid convoys come under attack:

Already I knew that if fired upon I was going to reply robustly and had said as much in the Mess the night before. Not to do so would be a dereliction of duty and principle and this made me nervous. To have the responsibility for protecting lives and the means by which to do so, a loaded gun and rules of engagement, yet to take the easier and safer option of turning and not acting would be difficult to live with. It would also be more dangerous in the longer term. UNPROFOR, in the multi-national sense, was already known to be timid and indecisive. This position was risible in the eyes of the locals and fast costing us their respect. The boy in the playground who had continually bitten his lip needed to give the school bully a swift right hook and show him for the coward he was. To put up with continued digs and snipes would only lead to others being bullied as well; it had to be stopped (Woolley 2004: 80-81).

Not using force is feminised by being “easier and safer,” “timid and indecisive,” and by “fast costing us [the locals’] respect.” The use of force, on the other hand, is linked to masculinity through use of “robustly” and the playground analogy of giving the bully a “swift right hook.” The analogy of bullies in the playground is used by several of the soldiers in their accounts, suggesting that having to refrain from using force was keenly felt as a restraint on their masculine pride, bound up with boyhood lessons of the importance of being able to stand up for oneself.

⁶⁵ This tension appears to occur to different degrees in different soldier’s accounts, a point which will be picked up on in the conclusion.

One theme which is striking is the way that the non- or limited- use of force is characterised as rendering the soldiers impotent, which is not surprising when we recall the ways in military training and culture in which active or even aggressive heterosexuality is constructed as being as much a part of military masculinity as fighting prowess. When on duty at a front line position, for example, Woolley feels impotent:

Hours later and on night duty the monotony continued, but at least with a heavy volume of gunfire flying in both directions to keep us awake. It was incredible that we were to just sit, watch, listen and report. Orange tracer rounds passing over the vehicle was not uncommon, which I think ironically symbolic of the UN's overall position. There was a lot of time to think! (Woolley 2004: 136).

Stankovic is even more explicit, expressing his frustration with the approach of the UN, which “neuters” soldiers on the ground, leaving them with frustratingly miniscule amounts of fire power, which they can only use to protect aid agencies:

The UN's ethos is... driven by peace. Military activities are proscribed by ludicrously complicated rules of engagement which effectively neuter any soldier on the ground. Because the various UN Resolutions which create UN operations are driven by the peace ethos, the force structures of UN military commands are necessarily minimalist in the firepower department. They're given just enough by the mandates coming out New York to exercise the administration of miniscule amounts of firepower, usually in the protection of aid agencies (Stankovic 2000: 323)

If we contrast his description of the UN approach with his description of NATO, we can almost detect a note of envy at the masculine ethos of the NATO approach of Find, Fix and Strike:

NATO is a warfighting machine. At the military level, its aim is the defeat of an enemy in order to satisfy some collective political goal. Its ethos is warfighting and its doctrine is unashamedly an American one – the application of serious firepower. At Staff College, we were forever being told about Find, Fix and Strike. And when it strikes it does so absolutely, with overwhelming

ferocity and, where possible, indirectly using aircraft, missiles and shells (Stankovic 2000: 323)

Here force could be said to be linked with masculinity through “defeat of an enemy”, “application of serious firepower,” “Find, Fix and Strike,” and “overwhelming ferocity.” As we have seen, Stankovic is, overall, quite critical of the NATO approach, but his description perhaps betrays another position, that combat is the more masculine and therefore superior strategy.

When Woolley and his troops are able to use force, schoolboy shame and soldier impotence are able to be banished, and masculinity is restored:

A change in the troop’s mood was distinctly apparent. This was nothing as dramatic as them going to bed boys and waking up as grown men, but life had most certainly been given a dose of reality and perspective. After a good night’s sleep, the gravity of the previous day’s event had been digested. The result was a bunch of lads who appeared very happy, more confident and far more interested in their job, having recognized that escorting was not just for show. Mixed with plenty of banter, this created a wonderful atmosphere of a properly gelled team whose collective experience to date was now harnessed by Olympic morale and self-esteem that I hoped would remain in credit for some time to come (Woolley 2004: 91; also see 55, 100, 112, 160).

Although Woolley contends that this was nothing so dramatic as his troops “going to bed boys and waking up as grown men,” the very calling into play of that metaphor indicates that it is masculinity that is at stake at some level. The result is the masculine homosociality referred to in chapter three, “a bunch of lads who appeared very happy, more confident, and far more interested in their job... a properly gelled team.” Thus for Woolley, the use of force is reinforced as masculine and proper soldiering.

Even General Rose, who as we saw, was one of the soldiers who was most explicit about his commitment to PSOs, provides evidence of the second discourse. There is an element of relief when he can get back to using force. This is partly because it is what he knows and what he is trained for, but it also can be interpreted as being because it enables him to prove his masculinity: “The time for diplomacy or negotiation was over and a great weight was

lifted from my shoulders as I found myself back in the familiar business of war fighting” (Rose 1998: 156; also see 187). Furthermore, he reports an incident where, when busting a road block, the Serbs decide to hold fire, much to the disappointment to the British troops: “Such was the fearsome reputation of the British units among the warring parties for returning fire, they were known by the title of “Shootbat”, rather than by their usual UN designation “Britbat” (Rose 1998: 58). This seems to be reported with a pride that clashes somewhat with his repeated assertions (mentioned above) that the non-use of force is a superior strategy on PSOs. At an individual level too, despite his commitment to negotiation, he is quick to use physical force if he deems it necessary, in response to a journalist who questions his (masculine) authority (Rose 1998: 95).

Several of the soldiers echo the training policy outlined above, with Duncan for example, writing that: “I believe that if you can train for high intensity operations and get it right, then you can step down to anything else” (Duncan 1994: 18). The use of “step down” indicates that Duncan thinks PSOs are easier than high intensity operations and thus positions them as subordinate.

Another discursive strategy found in the autobiographies is, after situations where restraint and control over the use of force has been shown, masculinity is reasserted in some other way. This is perhaps an alternative way of positioning the non-use of force as emasculating. For example, Duncan discusses a situation in Gornji Vakuf in central Bosnia where “every time we were fired at we fired back and things began to escalate violently. Shootings by either side, UN and locals, were happening more and more often until at one stage the Croats fired back with a wire guided anti-tank missile. This was clearly upping the ante a touch....” The company commander was despatched to talk to the local commanders and managed to deescalate the situation, and get the convoys moving again. The company commander “then ended up parking his Warrior in the main street of Gornji Vakuf between the two fractions and smoking a couple of packets of Hamlets, but he got away with it, which was good, and the convoys rolled again” (Duncan 1994: 16). It is as if, because the British have had to negotiate, rather than using superior force, they have to save face by demonstrating their masculinity in other ways, by being brave enough to stand in the middle of the street nonchalantly smoking cigars.

Non-use of force is also positioned as emasculating through soldiers making clear that the restraint on PSOs is not due to an inability to use force – which could be interpreted as impotence. It is a strategic decision, taken from a position of strength and power, rather than because the British soldier cannot effectively use force if he wanted to. This can be seen in the following examples where Duncan and Stewart seem torn between getting across how they refrained from using force, and getting across the fighting prowess of their men:

Naturally, as we were in Bosnia in the service of peace as such, we had to avoid opening fire if at all possible. Shooting, whether justified or not, can often be counter-productive. Yet, sometimes when complaining to one local force commander or other about his troops shooting at mine, I would be asked, “why didn’t you shoot back?” In a gun-law country, they expect that to happen. In fact, we only opened fire seven times throughout our tour. We certainly killed four men when we did so. I do not think we killed more than that (Stewart 1994: 321).

The British public was actually quite happy on the basis that if somebody in a far off country, as they consider it, is shooting at a British soldier, that soldier is entitled to fight back, and that’s what we did. Unfortunately, that involved killing some 30 plus people, of which I’m not proud, but it was necessary to show robustness... (Duncan 1994).

Soldiers’ reflections on the multi-dimensional operations in Afghanistan and Iraq also contain constructions of PSOs as emasculating. For example, soldiers who were involved in the invasion phase of the Iraq intervention in March 2003 expressed their excitement at a chance for ‘real soldiering’. When Collins is given the mission to go to Iraq, for example, he records in his memoir:

I returned elated to the battalion. There was an obvious buzz of excitement as I briefed the key commanders on the mission and tasks. This was it: 1 R Irish were going to war.... I looked around my team. They were solid and dependable. The difference was that this was to be a real war, not some intervention or peacekeeping mission (Collins 2005: 95).

Even those who were going out as part of the “stabilisation” phase in 2004, but who believed their operation to be more combat than PSO, echo these sentiments. Major David Bradley,

for example, is relieved to get the news he is going to Iraq, after much waiting and rumours, especially the news that “it will be a tour like no other. You will all be in a contact:”

There would no doubt be some action but, as in other theatres, it would probably only affect a few. No doubt many people shared my thoughts – “well, if it’s going to affect anybody I am going to bloody well make sure it affects me.” As a soldier and in particular an infantryman it is an unspoken desire to be in contact, to fire your weapon in anger and test yourself in combat (cited in Holmes 2006: 59).

This portrayal of combat as more exciting and real than PSOs is also found in the reflections of soldiers based in Basra, where PSO activities were prioritised, who wanted to be up in Al Amarah, where they were more likely be engaged in combat. One officer commented that the high level of interest from the FCO and media to places like Basra added the “continual requirement for a softer political approach to all problems than the average infantryman would like” (cited in Holmes 2006: 180).

Fieldtrips: Resisting the Label of a “Force for Good”

This positioning of PSOs as inferior to the “real business” of fighting was a particularly prevalent one in the informal conversations I had with soldiers as part of field work. To a man, the soldiers I spoke to hated the Forces for Good tag. One officer, a major, commented: “It’s naff... I hated when I first heard it... I didn’t become a soldier to be a “force for good.””⁶⁶ On first hearing the tag at a recruitment conference, another officer, a captain, remembered thinking “fuck off, I’m a trench shaker, heart breaker... not some huggy, touchy feely rhino saver.”⁶⁷ In response to a question about motivations, Colour Sergeants reported that “Soldiers are not motivated by PSOs – they want to fight,” and “most soldiers want to fight... I joined for that – to kill or be killed, to be a man.”⁶⁸ Officers from OPTAG also made comments on the training strategy of the Army, their words echoing the

⁶⁶ Informal conversation as part of field trip to Warminster, May 15 2006

⁶⁷ Informal conversation as part of field trip to OPTAG training for Royal Marines, RM Condor, Arbroath, 9- 12 May 2006

⁶⁸ Informal focus group with 8 Colour Sergeants, held at RM Condor, Arbroath, during OPTAG Training for Royal Marines to deploy to Afghanistan on Operations Harrick, 9-12 May 2006.

theme of privileging war-fighting as the real business of soldiering, and PSOs as easier and inferior: “High intensity warfighting is the priority. It’s easier then to ramp it down.”⁶⁹

Conclusion

The main contention of this chapter is that within British Army discourse around PSOs there are actually two competing discourses. One in which practices of conflict resolution are not just held to be the appropriate practices on PSOs, but are linked to masculinity; where it is not just more effective to use negotiation, control the use of force, and deliver humanitarian aid, but more manly. Another which links these conflict resolution practices to femininity, or feminizes them; it is not just that they are presented as inferior or frustrating in some way, but that they are specifically portrayed as emasculating practices.

This should not be particularly surprising if we recall the intimate relationship between soldiering and masculinity detailed in the second and third chapters. The effect of Army culture and training outlined in these chapters is that, for their sense of self worth and very identity, soldiers need to be thought of as masculine by both themselves and others – their peers, their colleagues and the general public.⁷⁰ It is this mutually constitutive relationship between soldiering and masculinity that makes it unsurprising that British Army discourse around PSOs is gendered. The pressure to remain masculine means that soldiers on non-combat operations such as PSOs, soldiers have two discursive strategies open to them. They can either link the conflict resolution practices of PSOs to masculinity and that way make their role remain masculine, or they can dismiss PSOs as inferior and emasculating, and press for the need to get back to ‘real soldiering’. I argue that the first discourse, constructing PSO practices as masculine, can be interpreted as constructing a new model of military masculinity, “peacekeeper masculinity.” Soldiers linking PSOs to masculinity are involved – consciously or not – in deconstructing the link between combat and masculinity

⁶⁹ British military representatives’ comments in the media also reinforce this idea that PSOs are emasculating. In an article in *The Times* in 2000, “Kindly Soldiers Losing their Killer Instinct,” Charles Guthrie, a former Chief of Staff of the British Armed Forces wrote: “Too many humanitarian missions could turn the professional British Army into a “touchy-feely” organisation, more concerned with widows and orphans than fighting” (Guthrie 2000).

⁷⁰ This is arguably the case for many groups of men, as the use of feminization to police men found in military training exists in a variety of other settings, such as primary schools and sports teams, but it is perhaps more so for soldiers because the message about being tough and manly is so entrenched in military culture.

and redefining masculinity in alternative ways. The second discourse, by contrast, can be seen as reinforcing the traditional links between soldiering and masculinity and reinforcing what can be termed “combat masculinity.”

It is important to emphasise that it is not the case that different soldiers clearly articulate one or other of the discourses. The argument is not that some soldiers have moved from one model of masculinity to another. Rather, soldiers appear to enact aspects of both peacekeeper and combat masculinity at different times and to differing degrees. Moreover, the tension between describing PSOs as masculine or emasculating is found throughout British Army discourse – within official sources such as military doctrine, and unofficial sources such as soldier’s reflections – indicating that the need to prove masculinity, or at least not to embrace femininity, is felt by the most experienced of Officers, tasked with authoring doctrine, to the most junior soldier, reflecting on his actions in the field.

The inclusion of British Defence Doctrine in *JWP 3-50*, and the overwhelming dislike of the Forces for Good tag indicated that the second discourse positioning PSOs as emasculating is dominant. The discourse which links PSOs to masculinity, and constructs a peacekeeper masculinity, is perhaps best interpreted as a significant but as yet unsuccessful challenge. The implications of this minority discourse will be further discussed in chapter 8, but before we can turn to that discussion, there is another crucial aspect of PSOs to consider when exploring the construction of military masculinities, and that is the various relations that soldiers are involved in.

Chapter Seven: Peacekeeper Masculinity and the Other

This chapter turns from a focus on the practices that soldiers are involved in on PSOs, to consider the relations soldiers enact and encounter on PSOs. As gender comes into being through interaction, a focus on relations has the potential to reveal a great deal about the construction of gender identities.⁷¹ Feminist scholarship has focused on the way in which women are positioned in certain ways, regardless of what they actually do, in order to define masculinities in certain ways. Scholarship on masculinities has added the insight that so too are other men, as part of a process of constructing hierarchical relations between the multiple forms of masculinity. Chapter six argued that in the British Army “master discourse” on PSOs there were two competing discourses – PSOs as masculine and PSOs as emasculating. When we consider the relations soldiers construct and enact, with both women and other men, in British Army discourse, this finding is both reinforced and complicated.

The first section of this chapter asks how women are portrayed, treated and positioned in the discourse of PSOs and considers whether relations with women *challenge* or *reinforce* the traditional gendered dichotomies found in the discourse on war and militarism. The gendered dichotomies that prevail in western language and culture, as previously discussed, associate masculinities with soldiering, war, combat, action, toughness and being the protector, and femininities with the home front, peace, passivity, weakness and being protected. They are an important factor in enabling the perpetuation of militarism and war, because the masculine side of the dichotomies is seen as superior to the feminine. A challenge to these dichotomies complements the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity, outlined in the previous chapter, because peacekeeper masculinity also challenges these traditional gendered dichotomies by associating masculinity and soldiering with peace and the practices of conflict resolution. Relations on PSOs between soldiers and women which reinforce these dichotomies, however, reinforce the hegemony of combat masculinity – the model which links masculinity to soldiering, war, militarism, action and so on, thus complementing and reinforcing the second discourse outlined in the previous chapter. The

⁷¹ This is not to suggest that practices and relations are two separate aspects of gender identity construction. The practices soldiers enact involve them in gendered relations; as relations are active processes, they involve gendered practices. The separation of practices and relations into two different chapters is an artificial analytical device, purely to simplify the presentation of the argument.

second section of the chapter considers how relations between British soldiers and other men in the PSO environment are constructed in British Army discourse, an equally vital source of information about the construction of British military masculinities on PSOs.

I: Relations with Women

One thing which is striking about British Army discourse surrounding PSOs – in both official and unofficial sources – is the relative absence of women. This is not particularly surprising or unusual for military discourse (see for example Kronsell 2006). In terms of military women, the percentage of women in the British Army, while rising, is still only 8.2% and women are excluded from many of the regiments and roles which are active in PSOs on the front line.⁷² Soldiers' reflections on PSOs therefore have little to say about female colleagues in part because they have so few. In terms of civilian women, they are not the subject matter of the official sources or the unofficial soldiers' reflections on PSOs, and therefore, again, relations with women are not given much thought. This does not mean that *gender* is absent from British Army PSO discourse, or not relevant, however: gender is always structuring discourse, even when men and women are not mentioned explicitly, in its sense as a symbolic system of meaning. Moreover, silences themselves can be revealing, as they indicate areas of gender-blindness that can disadvantage women. This section discusses examples of where and how women appear in the discourse, where they are missing, and the effects of these appearances and omissions. My main argument is that some appearances and omissions challenge traditional gendered dichotomies, and therefore support the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity. Others, meanwhile, reinforce traditional gendered dichotomies and therefore reinforce combat masculinity and the problems highlighted in chapters two and three. I consider military women before going on to consider civilian women, both on the home front and in the PSO environment.

Women Soldiers

Women's presence in the British Army has expanded since the end of the Cold War, both in terms of numbers recruited, currently 8.2%, and in terms of posts open to women, which

⁷² As of February 2006. See Ministry of Defence Fact Sheet "Women in the Armed Forces" at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/WomenInTheArmedForces.htm>

now stands at 71%.⁷³ These developments have been far from universally welcomed within the Army. Whilst in recent years there is less evidence of arguments which explicitly state a woman's place is in the home, women continue to be constructed as problematic in British Army discourse, as either incomplete men or sexualised disruptives (see chapter three). This suggests that while official British military discourse constructs women soldiers as, on the whole, a positive development, the debate over the continuing ban on women serving in combat positions indicates an underlying desire to retain the masculinity of soldiering (Woodward and Winter 2004; 2006). At the same time, there is some suggestion in academic literature and reports from the field on gender and peacekeeping that women make better peacekeepers, raising the possibility that British Army discourse on PSOs might contain more positive constructions of women soldiers. As noted in chapter two, the argument that women soldiers make better peacekeepers both challenges and reinforces gendered dichotomies. At the same time as challenging the notion that women make inferior soldiers by constructing them as experts, it reinforces traditional gendered dichotomies by reinforcing their links with peace and caring roles. Is there evidence of this debate in British Army discourse on PSOs? Is the resistance to women influenced by this debate in the operational context of PSOs? If so, what are the implications?

In official British Army discourse on PSOs, such as *JWP 3-50* and its accompanying training packages, the language is gender neutral, with very few references to gender differences and/or women soldiers, reflecting the Army's efforts to avoid discrimination and to be an Equal Opportunities employer.⁷⁴ The efforts to follow an equal opportunities approach means that doctrine offers little detail on the differences between male and female soldiers; as a result, nothing is said about the debate on whether women soldiers bring different skills to PSOs. This contrasts with the recruitment material. Here we find some evidence of specific attempts to portray women soldiers as particularly suited to PSOs. For example, one of the adverts produced as part of the Saatchi and Saatchi "Be the Best" campaign of the 1990s showed a woman cowering in the corner of a bombed building. As the film runs, a caption reads: "She's just been raped by soldiers. The same soldiers murdered her husband.

⁷³ As of February 2006. See Ministry of Defence Fact Sheet "Women in the Armed Forces" at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/FactSheets/WomenInTheArmedForces.htm>

⁷⁴ That the Ministry of Defence endeavours to be an Equal Opportunities employer can be seen in its Equality and Diversity Policy and the 2002 Report on Women in the Armed Forces, which are available on the MoD website at <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PersonnelPublications/EqualityAndDiversity/> [Accessed September 2007]

The last thing she wants to see is another soldier. Unless that soldier is a woman” (cited in both Brown 2002; De Groot 2001). The advert thus not only links several of the skills required on PSOs – good communication skills, a caring response, and empathy – to femininity, it also indicates that only a woman soldier can fulfil this role. The advert thus demonstrates the way in which presenting women as the perfect soldiers for PSOs both challenges and reinforces traditional gendered dichotomies. It challenges them through implying that women are the experts, valued and respected in their soldierly role. At the same time, it implies that in the post Cold War era, women soldiers’ speciality may be roles which focus on care-giving and protecting other women, roles which confine them to stereotypically feminine tasks.

There appears to be some effort to balance this message in subsequent recruitment literature. In the latest batch of brochures aimed at recruiting soldiers, women are shown in combat and technical roles in numbers disproportionate to their actual representation, and men are shown as often as women in the more ‘feminine’ roles, such as healthcare and administration. In the testimonials of serving soldiers used to attract new recruits, the women’s stories include Gunner Natalie Mehuet, who comments “Live firing is the best part of the job. You’re doing what you’re trained to do and controlling a weapon as sophisticated and powerful as the SA90 feels fantastic;”⁷⁵ and vehicle mechanic Julie Bastow who comments “My job as a vehicle mechanic is to repair or replace any mechanical part of any of the Army’s vehicles. It could be a motorbike, trailer, main battle tank – you name it! You get a lot of responsibility, but the job satisfaction once you’ve fixed the Army’s most technical vehicle is amazing.”⁷⁶ These stories serve to balance other examples of female soldiers in more traditional ‘feminine’ roles (healthcare, catering, administration), and who cite traditionally feminine reasons (security for their family, the caring role) as their motivation and reward. As such, in more recent recruitment literature, the Army presents itself as offering something for everyone, whatever they are motivated by, rather than carving out a role for women soldiers as peacekeepers.

⁷⁵ Combat (RG/BRO/101 November 2004) Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, p.23

⁷⁶ Engineering (RG/BRO/102 June 2005) Produced for the Ministry of Defence by the Army Recruiting Group, p.19

There is little evidence of the debate about women soldiers making better peacekeepers in unofficial British Army discourse. Few of the autobiographies mention women colleagues in relation to the operational context. Curtis is one of the few who does, and his comments are interesting. He admits to an initial sexist approach to women soldiers, doubting their physical fitness, which he quickly has to adjust when his colleague, Sue, turns out to be a fell runner who is as “fit as a whippet” (Curtis 1997: 458-60). Curtis is of the opinion that Sue clearly brings advantages to PSOs, because of her “softer image” and “approachable” nature. For example, he comments that: ““Sue was like a magnet for the kids, who were still wary of us and our weapons” (Curtis 1997: 470); that she also had excellent linguistic skills and her softer image helped in the negotiations” (Curtis 1997: 460); and “Having Sue on the team gave us an edge as she could cut through the machismo bollocks that male fighters normally adopt, giving each other the thousand yard stare. She gave us a softer image and made us more approachable” (Curtis 1997: 472). Again, Curtis’s reflections can be interpreted in different ways, ways which both challenge and reinforce gendered dichotomies. On the one hand, there is the respect for his colleague, and acknowledgement of her expertise and skills, in both peacekeeping roles and in more traditional masculine areas such as physical fitness. This respect challenges traditional gendered dichotomies in three interconnected ways; firstly, by creating relations of equality and respect with women; secondly, by highlighting Sue’s expertise at ‘masculine’ activities; and thirdly, by giving recognition to Sue’s successful conflict resolution practices, a recognition which aids their progression from feminised activities to practices considered necessary and valuable for all in the public arena. On the other, her success is linked to her femininity, which is presented without question, as if women are naturally “softer” and “more approachable.” As such, Curtis’s ostensible praise can be interpreted as reinforcing essentialist positions about women’s natural strengths and traditional gendered dichotomies. The paucity of data about women soldiers on PSOs makes it difficult to draw any firm conclusions. It is difficult, for example, to know if the more recent multi-dimensional operations in Iraq and Afghanistan lend weight to the argument that women soldiers make good peacekeepers – and the subsequent debate about whether this is a progressive step or not. Indeed, overall, this section indicates that there is a real need for more information on how women soldiers are constructed in British Army discourse on PSOs – both by themselves and others.

Women on the Home Front

In many cultural depictions of war and soldiering, as we have seen, women are designated the 'Home Front': Beautiful Souls in need of the protection of Just Warriors (Elshtain 1982; 1987). This gendered dichotomy serves to sustain the ideas that women are in need of protection and that it is masculine to fight and protect them, a construction which perpetuates militarism and war. In PSO discourse, do we find this gendered dichotomy disrupted or strengthened?

Most official sources of British Army PSO discourse, as we might expect, have little to say about women on the home front. They are not immediately relevant to PSOs, and are only mentioned in recruitment literature in relation to details such as accommodation options for married soldiers. In unofficial sources, however, such as soldiers' autobiographical reflections, we find some examples of relations with women on the home front which both challenge and reinforce traditional gendered dichotomies. Challenging the notion of the Beautiful Soul, the woman waiting at home, admiring the Just Warrior who fights to protect her, there are lots of examples in soldiers' reflections of respect and admiration for the women in their lives, where the women are active in all sorts of ways – as professionals, as soldiers, as friends, and often involved in the PSO environment themselves (Rose 1998: 81, 189, 229; Stankovic 2000: 28, 72, 273; Stewart 1994: 174; 309). Whether this is connected to the operation being peace support as opposed to traditional combat, however, is impossible to confirm, and men have often loved and respected individual women in their lives whilst contributing to constructions that reinforce stereotypes. As such, it is hard to assess the extent to which this dichotomy is being challenged in PSO discourse. In talking of their letters and phone calls home, some soldiers involved in PSOs draw on traditional discourses of how letters from loved ones sustain men through the deprivations and fears involved in being away on tour. Such examples reinforce the traditional notion of a gulf between the gendered domains of home and front with Woolley explicitly juxtaposing the "sweet smell of a girl's scent" with the "oil, sweat and other turret odours" (Woolley 2004: 31). At the same time, however, the discourse of PSOs disrupts this traditional dichotomy in a fundamental way. Soldiers on PSOs are intervening in other people's conflicts and, as such, it is not clear that they are protecting anyone on the home front. They evidently still appreciate the support of those at home, but arguably cannot derive the same reassurance from the notion that they are protecting loved ones at home. PSO discourse thus has an ambiguous relationship with the traditional discourse of Protector/Protected. There is not

much evidence of Elshtain's *Beautiful Soul* in PSO discourse, waiting, weeping and in need of protection. To a certain extent, however, PSO discourse does draw on Elshtain's ideas about Civic Cheerleaders and Official Mourners, with soldiers still feeling the need of support from the home front to make their role seem worthwhile, suggesting that gendered dichotomies contrasting home and front do still play their part in motivating soldiers, whatever the nature of the operation.

Arguably, what happens in PSO discourse is that the "protected" label shifts from women on the home front onto the civilian population of the country into which forces intervene. We noted in chapter two that this argument forms part of a broad stream of critique which is made of PSO discourses. Critics such as Ann Orford, Sherene Razack and Sandra Whitworth argue that PSO discourses construct the populations in war-torn countries as backward, primitive, chaotic and disordered; they are thus feminised in order to aid the construction of intervening nations and their peacekeepers as white, masculine, heroic, advanced and civilized (Orford 1999; Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004). According to this critique, discourses of peacekeeping are the new colonialism, justifying interventions whilst disempowering populations in ways similar to how women on the home front have been disempowered. To what extent can this construction be seen in British Army discourse surrounding PSOs? In order to address this question, I consider firstly how women in the civilian populations are constructed in British Army discourse on PSOs, before considering male civilians in the next section.⁷⁷

Civilian Women on PSOs

Apart from a note about the legal status of women soldiers, women are only mentioned twice in *JWP 3-50*.⁷⁸ This silence about women is somewhat surprising when we consider the gender-specific disadvantages which can affect women in conflict, particularly the kind of complex political emergencies that PSOs are intended to address. Although armed conflict negatively affects both women and men, with both suffering war abuses and traumas, disruptions and loss of resources, women are often disproportionately affected (El Jack 2003:

⁷⁷ Treating women and men separately is purely to enable as full an analysis as possible, enabling me to capture any differences in the way that military masculinities are constructed when it is in relation to women or to men.

⁷⁸ I am not including the Charter of the United Nations which appears in *JWP3-50* as Annex 1 and which contains a further five references to women.

14). For example, forced displacement disproportionately disadvantages women, because it results in reduced access to resources to cope with household responsibility and increased physical and emotional violence (El Jack 2003: 15). Secondly, physical and sexual violence, particularly towards women and children, occur with greater regularity during and after armed conflict. This can involve rape; increased rate of HIV infection, as well as other sexually transmitted infections (STIs); damage to physical and psychological health; disruption of lives; and loss of self-confidence and self-esteem:

Some types of GBV [gender based violence] are experienced almost entirely by women and girls during and after conflict, such as forced prostitution and sex work; increases in trafficking for sexual or other types of slavery; and forced pregnancy. Also, the impact of GBV has distinct consequences for women and girls including sexual mutilation; sterility; chronic reproductive/gynaecological health problems; and marginalisation from family and community due to stigma associated with sexual abuse (El Jack 2003: 16)

In this context, the neglect of women and the gender-specific impact of conflict is a significant omission in *JWP 3-50*.

Where women are mentioned, there is some acknowledgement of the specific circumstances of civilian women in the context of PSOs. The first example refers to women's role in their communities. In a section on "Negotiation and Mediation," as part of "Campaign Authority Promotion," *JWP 3-50* recommends that women's representatives, as "people of influence," could be crucial in solving disputes and problems:

[Negotiation and mediation] is a skill required at all stages of a PSO and will need to be exercised at every level. When there is no chain of command, identifying other people of influence, such as the local mayor, religious leader, or women's representatives could be crucial in resolving the problem.⁷⁹

The linkage of women with "people of significance" and "crucial," positions local women as noteworthy actors in their communities, a disruption to traditional stereotypes. Feminists

have long pointed out that women demonstrate considerably more agency in situations of conflict than the stereotypes of war discourse allow (El Jack 2003; Helms 2003; Moser and Clark 2001). To have this recognised in the official guidance for soldiers, albeit with women as the last in a list of possibly crucial groups, is a step in the right direction.

The other mention of women is in relation to “Operational Environment Control” and the control tasks and techniques required on PSOs:

Military operations will usually require control to be established to monitor, limit or deny access to many areas... At the tactical level, guards and checkpoints may constitute a major interface between the contingent and local populace. It is therefore important that service personnel carrying out these duties are aware of local customs, particularly in respect of dealing with women, the very young and the old.⁸⁰

This is an important acknowledgement of the issue of cultural sensitivity – in many cultures, the idea of women being searched by male soldiers is deemed to be offensive; *JWP 3-50* is indicating that soldiers need to be aware of this risk. Indeed, the importance of cultural sensitivity for PSOs is one of the five guiding principles and thus a major theme of *JWP 3-50*. The recurring message is the importance of British soldiers being fully briefed on cultural and religious issues. The “Third Principle – Sensitised Action” states:

PSO requires all personnel to develop a detailed understanding and respect for the law, religion, customs and culture of the range of actors engaged in the PSO complex, particularly with respect to the indigenous population. Ideally, intelligence activity will inform the training process, and constant effort will be needed during a PSO to ensure that responses and actions remain culturally appropriate and are perceived by the recipients as intended. Through the sensitive action of individuals or groups, within the actor complex, mutual trust and respect can be developed.⁸¹

⁷⁹ JWP 3-50 Paragraph 511

⁸⁰ JWP 3-50 Paragraph 523

⁸¹ JWP 3-50 Paragraph 323; also see paragraph 505

This promotion of cultural sensitivity is potentially progressive, particularly in terms of Orford, Razack and Whitworth's critiques. Linking sensitivity to soldiering challenges the insensitivities of traditional military masculinities; combat masculinity is not associated with understanding or compassion but with toughness, aggression, competitiveness and the ability to defeat enemies with force. On the other hand, the promotion of cultural sensitivity in JWP 3-50 is problematic. There is little recognition of the possible tensions between cultural sensitivity and women's rights or the way in which cultural sensitivity may reinforce local patriarchies (see for example Okin 1999). Threats to women's security are often those human rights violations which are 'private:' hidden behind the heading of 'culture' (Peterson 1990). Yet, whenever the need for cultural briefings is mentioned in *JWP 3-50*, the wording suggests that cultural and religious beliefs are something to be respected and left well alone. *JWP 3-50* notes, for example, that forces:

must routinely respect the laws and customs of the host nation, and must be seen to have a respectful regard for local, religious and secular beliefs. This latter point is particularly important where local religious or cultural beliefs may consider behaviour routinely acceptable to members of the international community as socially or culturally unacceptable.⁸²

Training for PSOs involves extensive cultural briefings in order to fulfil this priority of cultural sensitivity; and this has continued for the present day more complex multi-dimensional operations into Afghanistan and Iraq.⁸³ In training, as in doctrine, the focus is on accepting cultures as they are. If this means accepting violations of women's rights, that is what soldiers must do. The cultural sensitivity – which is potentially progressive in that it challenges both traditional gendered dichotomies and arguments that interventions are the new imperialism – does not seem to extend to gender sensitivity.

Whilst it is unlikely that soldiers attempting to change the culture of the place into which they are intervening would be successful, the lack of discussion or debate about other

⁸² JWP 3-50 Paragraph 306; the footnote makes it clear that the main concern here is that soldiers' Rest and Recuperation activities may offend local cultures, but the text also implies that soldiers should not intervene if something in the local culture offends them.

⁸³ This is recommended in JWP 3-50 paragraph 505, is mentioned in many of the autobiographical accounts, and was part of the training the Royal Marines received at RM Condor, Arbroath, as witnessed on fieldwork during May 2006

cultures perpetuates several problematic ideas. One is the idea that cultures are monolithic and static, whereas, in reality, cultural practices which concern women's rights are likely to be the subject of debate between various interest groups. To present them as monolithic and static is to privilege the status quo and the groups which currently hold power, which may not be in the service of long term peace and security. Secondly, it perpetuates the idea that women's rights are a secondary concern to that of achieving peace and security when it is rather the case that they are an essential prerequisite. The emphasis on respecting cultures reveals what appears to be an institutional blindness when it comes to tackling one of the major aspects of the conflicts into which the British Army has intervened – gender based violence. Although there is little evidence to suggest that British soldiers have been perpetrators of the gender based violence on PSOs highlighted in the second chapter, in order to be effective peacekeepers, British soldiers need to be fully aware of and active working to eradicate such abuses, but this is absent from JWP 3-50.⁸⁴

These themes are reflected in the *unofficial* British Army discourse around PSOs. For example, one of the situations British peacekeepers in Bosnia had to deal with were road blocks, when civilians would try and block the UN from passing in order to persuade them to help them with their grievances – often the return of their fighting men and boys who had been captured by one of the opposing sides. When Rose encounters a women's blockade in Hadzici, his description of the event takes the women seriously as actors of significance in their communities. He notes that the “women of Hadzici were a militant lot and would allow nobody through their roadblock...” (Rose 1998: 115). Rose and his convoy only get through because it is late in the day, but they go back to talk to the women, and hear the story of their missing husbands and sons. Although Rose notes that the women burst into tears when they are given some soup, this is linked to the enormous stress they are under, and the overall picture is of strong women, determined to achieve the return of the missing men, and using effective tactics in order to so; they are not passive or victims.

⁸⁴ Ironically, the British Government (in partnership with Canada) has been at the forefront of developing such training, with an online training resource for soldiers (see www.genderandpeacekeeping.org). However, the absence of any reference to this in British Army discourse, and the fact that it was developed by the Department for International Development (DFID), rather than the MoD, indicates that it is intended for other nationalities' militaries.

This theme is overshadowed in the discourse by examples which position women in less progressive ways. Stankovic's account of the same event, for example, constructs the women as a mad and hysterical mob:

The mad women of Hadzici decide it's Protest Day and they all sit in the road at S-2 [check-point] with their kids and babies and won't budge until their demands are met. Nothing goes in and out of Sarajevo all day long. Convoys are stuck on both sides of these women... So, I'm sitting in this closed up vehicle and wondering just what I'm supposed to do about all these women. Eventually the vehicle stops and we all hop out and there they all are – all these women dressed in black and sitting in the middle of the road and screaming that they won't budge until they get word that their husbands and sons, who are POWs in a Muslim prison in Tarcin, are alive... It ended up with me and Victor in a tiny room with their representatives. We made a deal: only our vehicles in and out in return for Victor promising to get the International Committee of the Red Cross to look into the matter immediately. Sounds easy but it required a load of play acting, sympathetic nodding, and basically, grovelling (Stankovic 2000: 81-2).

It is clear that Stankovic does not take the women seriously; he argues that the only way for rational British soldiers to deal with “all these women,” “dressed in black” and “screaming” is by humouring them – “play acting” and “grovelling”. Although Stankovic emphasises madness and irrationality when describing negotiations with Balkan men as well (as we shall see below), the men are taken seriously as actors with a vital role in Balkan politics in a way that these women are not.

There are indications that this attitude remains when it comes to the issue of women's agency in more recent operations in Iraq. Collins' final points on the intervention in Iraq include this disparaging observation about the failings of the UN, which depict attempts to recognise women's agency and importance in conflict resolution and building democracy as “political correctness:”

The UN's main contribution to the whole election was to insist on one in three of the candidates being women. Iraq was secular under Saddam and women had played a full part in the administration, but even so all the parties were finding it hard to recruit enough female candidates. Such a progressive idea was all very well in New York, and I have no issue with it in principle, but

I did leave Iraq feeling that they had a way to go yet before they were ready for the PC lobby” (Collins 2005: 384).

Rather than constructing local women as having agency and power, local women are more likely to be constructed as backward and primitive – portrayed as rural peasants, or mentioned most often in traditional roles, such as cleaning, caring, and cooking – and/or as sexual objects. For example, reflecting on Bosnia, Woolley writes:

With so few women living in camp the Cheshire subalterns insisted that our house cleaner should be young and pretty, which initially seemed a fair idea. Unsurprisingly, this was not a success as the chosen girl, scared of getting her hands dirty, did nothing more than sweep the hall and landing each day. So, before long a reluctant consensus was to release the said girl and look for a grafter. We found one in a middle-aged woman with a moustache, a promising beard and only a few teeth, just the antidote for the desperate Casanovas. With children to support, she was highly motivated and worked like a Trojan. She also took our laundry home, which would reappear the next day, one quarter of the time it took our laundry unit, and she ironed it. Unfortunately, the laundry would smell a bit dodgy, a sort of Bosnian river-armpit combination, which nobody likes, but she needed the money and deserved to keep the job (Woolley 2004 76).

Woolley thus not only positions women as backward, he demonstrates a casual sexism which runs throughout his account, and is echoed in many of the other autobiographies. As discussed in the earlier chapters, sexism is associated with traditional military masculinities, resulting from the constant deriding of women and all things feminine in Army training and culture. Although not overt in the autobiographies, sexism does not disappear when soldiers are on PSOs (see Stankovic 2000: 286, 347; Stewart 1994: 96; Woolley 2004: 124). Moreover, a relaxed attitude towards pornography runs through the soldiers’ reflections (see for example Holmes 2006: 167; Stankovic 2000: 30; Woolley 2004: 68). Woolley, for example, tells of an episode where a local Croat teenager, Mario, not only finds a house for them to stay in, but supplies them with pornography:

He had a selection, or more accurately “a collection” of X-rated European pornographic films whose quality was particularly questionable, but ideal to keep the morale of the troops up. This was an unexpected distraction, something that Trooper Chambers

must have influenced very closely, but well done him for showing initiative...

The village was moderately active that night, with bursts of automatic fire resonating off the buildings and valley walls. This was a little bizarre as four of the section watched pornographic movies in the front room of a Croat house while the deadly glow of orange tracer rounds could be seen from the window for anyone interested enough to lift their eyes from the television screen (Woolley 2004: 156).

The portrayal is of pornography as something completely unproblematic, that every soldier appreciates for its morale-boosting qualities. This echoes the blindness to gender-based violence mentioned above, which, whilst not inevitably connected to pornography, is very often involved (see Segal 1997).

Even if the positioning of women as passive, backward or sexual objects overshadows representations of them as powerful agents in their own communities, it is not the case that this is the only way they are positioned in PSO discourse. Alongside the sexism, there are lots of examples of women being treated with respect (Rose 1998: 115; Stankovic 2000: 170, 190; Stewart 1994: 174, 309). Stankovic even attempts to address gender-based violence by confronting a colleague who turns up uninvited in a female interpreter's room one night (Stankovic 2000: 141).⁸⁵ However, this instance is not typical. In soldiers' reflections of PSOs, we find a casual acceptance of gender based violence against women which echoes the ignorance indicated in official discourse. For example, Bob Stewart describes a meeting with local commanders in a café in Bosnia and casually mentions that he left shortly after concluding the meeting, "having declined, as courteously as possible, an offer from the café's owner of a couple of girls each" (Stewart 1994: 138). There is no further comment, despite the fact that British soldiers should have been aware of the problem of women being trafficked into Bosnia at that time. Even if these women had not been trafficked, they were clearly under some sort of "ownership" of the café owner, but the casual acceptance implies that this sort of thing is normal for soldiers. The blindness to trafficking is also found in Stankovic's reflections, where he innocently asks a colleague where all the "stunning waitresses" have come from, to be told that:

They're pros, Mike, y'know, whores... restaurant downstairs, knocking shop upstairs. Probably doing the bizzo with their clients between courses!'...Whole place is mad. It's the war. They're not even locals these girls. They're Ukranians, Latvians, Lithuanians, y'know... The Wall comes down, nothing at home but a depressed economy and... flutter, flutter, flutter down here to the war where there's easy money... place is run by the mafia like everything else...' he paused for a moment, his fork hovering inches from his mouth, '... but it's still the best restaurant in Trogir and it's got its very own night club" (Stankovic 2000: 69).

There is no awareness here of the actual circumstances of trafficked women; anyone with any appreciation would be unlikely to use the terms “flutter” down to “easy money.” In relation to the rape camps which were a particularly hideous aspect of the war in the Balkans (see Allen 1996; Niarchos 1995; Stigmayer 1994), Stewart gives an American journalist a very earnest assurance that if they see any evidence, British soldiers will not be passive bystanders. This is a positive step, but the extremely high incidence of rape used as a weapon of war in the Balkans arguably necessitated a more proactive approach. Rose puts his one mention of the rape camps in inverted commas, which could mean any number of things – scepticism, for example, or horror – but there is no further comment, no explanation (Rose 1998: 47). It appears that the rape camps were not considered a priority by the British soldiers. Priorities are set by the mission mandate, which would be beyond the control of the individual soldier, but many of the soldiers make clear how much leeway they had in Bosnia to set their own priorities on the ground, implying the rape camps could have been a priority if they had been considered important enough.

To summarise this section, then, there is some evidence within British Army discourse on PSOs of women being taken seriously as actors in their communities, disrupting the traditional gendered dichotomies found in war discourse where women civilians are positioned as passive victims. There is also some evidence of sensitivity towards the gendered nature of conflict, in the example of the need for respecting local women at checkpoints. Linking sensitivity to soldiering is an important disruption to traditional constructions of military masculinity, which is not usually associated with cultural

⁸⁵ This intervention is not welcomed by the female interpreter, but the point remains that Stankovic acknowledged his male colleagues' wrongdoing and attempted to act.

sensitivity. More often than not, however, traditional gendered dichotomies are either ignored or reinforced in PSO discourse. Women are generally not taken seriously as actors in their communities, and are often portrayed as passive victims or as backward in some way. These discursive positionings aid the construction of British soldiers as active, heroic, strong, as well as more intelligent, rational and advanced. Women are also sometimes positioned as sexual objects, which reinforces traditional gender dichotomies and the aggressive heterosexuality associated with combat masculinity. Moreover, the cultural sensitivity which is emphasized as central to PSOs does not seem to extend to gender sensitivity as there is a blindness in both official and unofficial sources of PSO discourse to the gender based violence which is an intrinsic part of conflict.

II: Relations with Men

In this section, I examine the relations that are constructed in British Army discourse between soldiers and other men. Although the formal sources again are limited in what they reveal, the informal sources are a rich source of data, as soldiers' reflections focus on the people they had most contact with in the field and this tends to be other men – whether local belligerents, local civilians, visiting politicians and journalists, and NGO or aid workers.⁸⁶ The autobiographies demonstrate that men construct their masculinity in relation to other men in a variety of ways. It happens when, whether at conscious or subconscious level, men accept or reject different ways of being a man demonstrated by other men. It can also be seen to occur in actual interactions between men, where there is an element of masculine game playing or power struggles to assert one's masculinity. Soldiers' constructions of masculinity in relation to that of other men can be seen to both reinforce and complicate the two discourses.

Hypermasculine Local Warlords

The most prominent theme in British Army discourse on PSOs when it comes to relations with other men is the construction of local military commanders and soldiers as excessively big, tough and aggressive, or as "hypermasculine." Throughout the autobiographies, when describing local commanders, the emphasis is on physical size, strength, aggression and

⁸⁶ Of course, women fall into all of these categories too, especially the latter four, but men tend to predominate in all areas of a PSO, and this is reflected in PSO discourse.

brutality. There is also a consistent theme of local belligerents being mad and irrational. These themes serve to construct peacekeeper masculinity as controlled, rational and intelligent, reinforcing the associations between peacekeeper masculinity and the practices of conflict resolution. At the same time as privileging the practices of conflict resolution over the practices of combat, however, they serve to position those in areas of conflict as backward, primitive and violent, in just the sort of neo-imperial constructions highlighted by Orford, Razack and Whitworth. As such, hypermasculinity can be said to be a site where gender and race or ethnicity often combine.

In this discourse, soldiers' reflections on Bosnia echo and reinforce the "ancient hatreds" discourse of the wars in the Balkans which was prominent amongst UK politicians, media and society. This discourse articulates the conflicts of the 1990s as a "Balkan war" driven by violence, barbarism and ancient intra-Balkan hatred stretching back hundreds of years (Hansen 2006: 106). For example, Stankovic writes of "Balkan extremes," "Balkan savagery" and that "In a nutshell, it's pathological behaviour driven by deep seated perceptions or misperceptions of past injustices" (Stankovic 2000: 277-8). Woolley writes that:

Colonel Bob had helped negotiate another ceasefire in the past few days by banging a few local commanders' heads together, but this had little effect in Bosnia. The warring factions had very weak chains of command and even less discipline. The soldiers were all too drunk and primitive to care and the leaders too hamstrung on old scores to arbitrate through diplomatic means (Woolley 2004: 196).

Similarly, Curtis writes of the "madness and convoluted logic of Bosnia" (Curtis 1997: 510) and Stewart disparages the pre-deployment briefings on the political situation of the Balkans on the grounds that it is impossible to understand such madness (Stewart 1994: 12).

The irrationality of the local commanders is highlighted consistently – they are mostly mad, illogical and stupid. Rose, for example, draws attention to the way that General Mladic alternately weeps and shouts in meetings, and launches into "crazed accounts of what he would do to anyone who threatened the Serbs" (Rose 1998: 274). Most Balkan leaders are portrayed this way by Rose: Karadzic is "dressed bizarrely in a baggy camouflage suit" and

“out of control;” Koljevic is “something of a madman,” shouting obscenities in a high pitched voice; and Zametica, Karadzic’s political advisor, takes to showing off his weaponry when, “in saner times,” he had been an academic in the UK (Rose 1998: 287). Balkan local commanders are often presented as stupid as well as irrational, as exemplified in Rose’s comments after meeting with Ganic and Karadzic respectively: “It would be difficult enough if Ganic had been logical in his arguments, but having to deal with such an unstructured mind made the negotiations double torture” (Rose 1998: 203); and “It took me some time before I began to unravel this complicated piece of logic [Karadzic’s prediction of how the war would go], which clearly owed nothing to Socrates” (Rose 1998: 48). However, when local commanders are not stupid, they are not linked to intelligence or any other positive traits. General Mladic, for example, is not a stupid man and therefore his approach is characterised as “manipulative” and “brutal cunning” (Rose 1998: 243; Stankovic 2000: 313).

Duncan is also concerned to construct a British military masculinity in opposition to the violent, irrational, primitive masculinity of the Balkan warlords. He writes of an incident between a British junior officer and General Pralic, after Pralic’s car is hit by a Warrior:

Pralic leapt out brandishing his pistol and shouting and screaming against everybody. The subaltern took his helmet off, climbed out, fetched his interpreter and said, ‘General, I don’t know what you’re doing but officers should not behave like that. Put that pistol away, calm down and behave like a gentleman (Duncan 1994: 18).

Duncan presents the situation as more manly to be controlled and civilised, and, from his account in general, clever, persistent and flexible, than to be the violent, tough guy with gun. Stewart similarly presents the random, cruel, irrational violence of the locals as cowardly and unmanly (Stewart 1994).

Some of the interactions with local belligerents involve a certain amount of ‘masculine game playing’ where the British soldiers and Bosnian commanders try and assert their masculinity over one another. Rose comments, for example, that Haris Silajdzic, the Bosnian Muslim leader, “was not averse to putting in a call to the US Secretary of State Warren Christopher in my presence, as though to tell me his guns were bigger than mine” (Rose 1998: 39).

Silajdzic snubs the British peacekeepers in front of TV cameras, only to explain minutes later that “It was nothing personal. I need to be seen to be tough on the UN” (Rose 1998: 306). At a crucial meeting between the US General Wesley Clark and General Mladic, Mladic attempts to get Clark to eat some extremely hot local chillies. “Too hot for you, eh?” crowed Mladic, stuffing another into his mouth, hugely pleased that his guest had failed this test of virility” (Stankovic 2000: 307).⁸⁷ Curtis tells of the importance of having the better weapon in these contests of masculinity, and the equal importance of pretending if you do not (Curtis 1997: 461; also see Woolley 2004: 27).

Collins tells of a situation in Northern Ireland which also captures this masculine game playing:

Surly crowds watched from each side of the road. On one side a group of men, some wearing Celtic football shirts over massive beer bellies, stood with their backs to the pub, staring hard at Sean [Company Commander] or consulting each other with a guffaw over pints of lager, while putting on exaggerated gum-chewing or spitting displays. On the other side of the road, another mob, some of them in Glasgow Rangers tops, with cropped hair, heavily tattooed arms and knuckle-duster sovereign rings, stared aggressively back across the road... I watched as Sean, having finished his brief, laughed, slapped the police inspector on the back and turned to come back. The platoon commanders and sergeants jumped down from their Land-Rovers and Saxons and gathered around the command vehicle. They walked in a swagger, rolling with the weight of their belt equipment and body armour enhanced with heavy ballistic plates. They had all put on their helmets in anticipation and now it was difficult to recognise individuals (Collins 2005: 60).

We can see how the local belligerents are involved in a game, with their “exaggerated gum-chewing or spitting displays,” “knuckle-duster sovereign rings” and “aggressive stares.” What is also interesting to note is the way in which the British soldiers, acting in a peacekeeping role, also feel the need to play the game: walking in a swagger, showing off their body armour. Indeed, British soldiers often comment in their reflections on the need for them to prove their toughness in order to gain the respect of the local belligerents and

⁸⁷ This meeting became infamous as Clark was tricked into swapping hats with Mladic then captured by photographers. The ensuing photo indicated that Clark and Mladic were commanders of equal

therefore to be successful in the mission (Collins 193, Spicer 135, Rose, 366, Curtis 512). This suggests that the construction of peacekeeper masculinity relies upon the continued reinforcement of combat masculinity – a complex and contradictory situation which raises questions over the extent to which peacekeeper masculinity can be said to be progressive (an issue which will be returned to in the next two chapters). The argument that soldiers need to prove their toughness in order to be effective peacekeepers is not universal, however. There are also examples of British soldiers winning the masculine game playing by outsmarting the local belligerents – using humour, bluff, confidence, but crucially, non-violence (see Stankovic 2000: 338).⁸⁸ This can be interpreted as constructing a peacekeeper masculinity which challenges the hegemony of combat masculinity.

The soldiers' reflections demonstrate the importance of bodies in gender constructions. The British soldiers nearly always describe the physical features of the local commanders in order to strengthen the particular construction of masculinity as hypermasculine: they are big, brutal and ugly. For example, Rose writes "Mladic, the Commanding General of the Bosnian Serb Army, was in the classic mould of generals: fat, swaggering and coarse-featured" (Rose 1998: 48); "The commander was a sinister man with hard eyes and a scarred face who looked uneasy at the mention of Mladic" (Rose 1998: 243); Karadzic "was looking ill, his arms covered in sores" (Rose 1998: 252); and "Delic sat snorting and blowing like an old walrus washed up on the beach" (Rose 1998: 256). For Curtis, the Croats "were huge fuckers and made most of the UN troops look like Boy Scouts" (Curtis 1997: 460). In the following account, Stankovic likens a local belligerent to a "Neanderthal:"

As if on cue the door burst open and one of the local yobbos barged his way into the restaurant. He was a Neanderthal – six foot four, thickset, huge head with black, close set, unintelligent eyes and a skinhead crop. He wore jeans, trainers and a cheap blue and white donkey jacket with a fluffy white fake fur collar. The black FN assault rifle, which he slammed down on the small wooden bar, completed this picture, but the bar girl seemed to know him and a glass of beer miraculously appeared in his paw. He glared around the restaurant, fixing those horrid little eyes, so

status and in relations of mutual respect and admiration.

⁸⁸ Here, Stankovic recounts how he catches a caustic remark made by the Bosnian Muslims about General Rose, so translates it for Rose. Rose then learns it in Serbo-Croat and quotes it back to the team of senior Muslim negotiators, causing embarrassment and gaining him the upper hand: "Well, here I am Chetnik deluxe, full of empty words," Rose roared, laughing at the meeting.

full of contempt and hatred, on the British table. Clearly his entrance hadn't caused the stir he'd expected as celebrations continued unabated. He gulped down his beer and demanded another (Stankovic 2000: 70).

What happens next demonstrates that hypermasculinity is not a stable construction, but rather one which is always at risk of collapsing into femininity. This "Neanderthal" ends up exhibiting behaviours which are conventionally associated with femininity: irrationality, overly-emotional, inexperienced, and child-like:

Nearby, Trogir was rocking with automatic gunfire. Our man went berserk. He'd flipped onto auto and was spraying the night with long, raking bursts of automatic fire. His body shook and juddered in sympathy with his weapon as he staggered around the patio. The magazine empty, he dug a fresh one from his jacket pocket and, once he'd inexpertly loaded it and wrenched the cocking level back, he continued to blast the opposite shoreline with another long, raking burst. Then the FN jammed. Neanderthal man was hunched over it, furiously tugging at the cocking handle, his face black and contorted with the effort. It had jammed solid (Stankovic 2000: 70)

A British soldier drunkenly goes to help him but ends up, because of the damage the "Neanderthal" has caused by not looking after his weapon, breaking the gun...

The world went silent. We gazed in horror at the broken rifle, then at the smashed breech block and finally at its owner, who was staring in shock and amazement at the bits and pieces. Oh shit! That's it. We're dead. He's going to rip us apart. Slowly he sank to his knees, collected up the pieces and turning, sat down heavily, cross-legged, clutching the FN's shattered innards. He looked up at us in utter bewilderment. We stood there transfixed by the ghastly horror of it all, dreading what was to come. His gaze went back to the broken metal that his massive paws were nursing. Then his shoulders heaved and he let out a huge sob and burst into tears, blubbering over his broken toy.

Seizing the moment, we fled into the night before his grief turned to blind fury (Stankovic 2000: 71).

Similarly, when Rose describes the local commanders and political leaders, as well as being depicted as big and aggressive, there are also many references to physical weaknesses and

effeminacy. Ganic, for example, “flutters his soft white hands” (Rose 1998 200), while Koljevic “went red in the face at the slightest provocation and shouted obscenities at us in a high-pitched voice” (Rose 1998: 287). Rose also highlights the irrationality, as we have seen, and examples of excessive emotion:

With customary drama, he [Karadzic] said the situation was becoming intolerable to him.... As he spoke, I noticed that Mladic was silently weeping... He ended by warning us that if another NATO air strike was threatened against his forces, we would deem himself to be at war with the UN, and his army would start shelling UNPROFOR positions. At this point Mladic miraculously cheered up and launched into one of his more crazed accounts of what he would do to anyone who threatened the Serbs (Rose 1998: 274).

Rose’s descriptions illustrate the close links between hypermasculinity and femininity in British Army discourse, enabling British soldiers to feminise those they simultaneously characterise as hypermasculine. In PSO discourse, the linking of local commanders, in other respects the epitome of warrior masculinity, to the feminised traits of weakness, irrationality and emotion, not only constructs peacekeeper masculinity as controlled, disciplined and physically fit, but as superior, the ideal way of being a soldier and a man – the hegemonic model.

Yet, there are also examples of respect and admiration for the local commanders and their hypermasculinity, providing evidence of the second discourse in the autobiographical accounts, the discourse reinforcing combat masculinity. In instances of friendly banter, mutual respect between fighting men and an admiration in the language used to recount encounters with these men, an admiration for strength, toughness and aggression and a reluctance to challenge the traditional hegemonic model of military masculinity can be discerned. For example, Stankovic describes working in the -67 degree with wind chill temperatures:

Everything froze. Nothing would work. Diesel jellied up in fuel tanks, but guess what? The locals kept on fighting. We were sort of all right with a lukewarm Discovery wrapped around us. But the locals kept on at it. They’re the hardest bastards I’ve ever seen... We’re stopped by this soldier, a mad long hair with broken teeth and wild eyes. He’s wearing trainers, cammo trousers and a

lumberjack shirt open at the neck and with rolled up sleeves. He's clutching some bottle of poison and waving and grinning like mad at us. And, we're freezing *inside* the vehicle! We think we're hard as nails in the Paras, but these boys are in a completely different league" (Stankovic 2000: 74).

Similarly, Woolley notes in his diary that the soldiers he meets "were very engaging," with their "ruddy looks," and "high spirits," laughing and passing a bottle of slivovitz (plum brandy) around. Woolley joins them "with feigned alacrity to keep up appearances," because "Bosnia is a man's world and I think drinking is a respected pastime" (Woolley 2004: 27). Indeed, "These men seemed proud, happy and confidently at ease, very much men's men. Their respect for size and strength was clearly part of their culture." He describes a Serb captain as "A charming man with military bearing and composure, his professional soldier status could not be hidden" (Woolley 2004: 116). In this second discourse, we see a reluctance to let go of the traditional model of military masculinity, which associates manliness with the skills and practices of combat.

Soldiers of Other Nationalities

The tension between the two discourses is also evident in the ways in which British soldiers construct their masculinities in relations to soldiers of other nationalities. As PSOs are multi-national, comparisons with other nation's soldiers are often made in British Army discourse on PSOs, and as the world's largest and arguably most influential army, it is the US that is the most common point of comparison. There is evidence of US soldiers being constructed as arrogant, aggressive and "trigger happy," echoing the construction of hypermasculine local commanders (Collins 2005: 84-5; Holmes 2006: 111; Stankovic 2000: 290-292),⁸⁹ and serving to position British soldiers as different: more intelligent, civilised, rational and humane. The US soldiers are positioned as overly reliant on military hardware and force, and lacking the skills for the "hearts and minds" aspects of PSOs (Hastings 2006; Rayment 2006).⁹⁰ At the same time, an envy of the US approach and its military hardware is

⁸⁹ Two of the phrases commonly used in Iraq, for example, are "all the kit – full of shit" and "all the gear – no idea" (Holmes 2006: 111)

⁹⁰ This view was common in comments made during informal focus group with 8 Colour Sergeants, held at RM Condor, Arbroath, during OPTAG Training for Royal Marines to deploy to Afghanistan on Operations Harrick, 9-12 May 2006. Some British soldiers give more nuanced accounts of the US soldiers and their skills, with McLaughlin criticising the aggressive American approach but describing individual soldiers with respect (McLaughlin 2007: 226), suggestions that the Americans have got much better at the "hearts and minds stuff" and that the US Army's ability to follow combat troops

often evident (Collins 2005: 122; Stankovic 2000: 292), indicating the continuing power of the model of combat masculinity. Indeed, there are indications in the discourse of great resistance to the British Army being linked to those nations that have made peacekeeping their forte, such as Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries. Spicer, for example, implies that the British would not have failed as the Dutch did, to prevent genocide at Srebrenica, where 6,000 Muslim men and boys were massacred:

If there had been a British battalion there, they would have put up a fight. It is easy to be wise after the event but, had it been me and my battalion, I would rather have put up a fight, whatever the outcome, than put my hands up and then stood by and watched a massacre. There was a ghastly photograph afterwards of the poor Dutch commanding officer being forced to have a drink with General Mladic, after the Serbs had taken over the town – a complete and utter disgrace” (Spicer 2000: 136)

Although depictions of the British Army as “better at hearts and minds” are common, there is resistance to making this the “unique selling point” or defining skill. Expertise at combat is much preferred.⁹¹

Aid Workers, Journalists and Politicians

Politicians, journalists and aid workers are also key players on any PSO. Again, there is a tension to be found in British Army discourse. There are examples where these other men are treated with and described with respect (see for example Collins 2005: 125; Rose 1998: 44, 79, 320, 345; Stewart 1994: 324). When being complimentary of aid workers, politicians and journalists, what is highlighted is their compassion, bravery, grasp of the situation and ability to get things done and contribute to the process of finding peace. As these practices reflect those of peacekeeper masculinity, the admiration for them could be said to be a way of confirming the superiority of peacekeeper masculinity. More often than these examples of respect and admiration, however, are examples of politicians, journalist and aid workers portrayed as weak, effeminate, and ineffectual. Journalists are armchair specialists, criticising from the comfort of their own homes (Rose 1998: 59, 66, 224; Stankovic 2000:

with large sums for reconstruction work enabled them to be much more successful than the stereotypes of overly aggressive, “trigger happy” Americans implied (Informal conversations during field trip to Warminster, May 15 2006 and see Holmes 2006: 111.)

440). Politicians are weak – prone to indecisiveness, arrogance and hypocrisy (Collins 2005: 17; Rose 1998: 67, 192, 235). NGO workers and UN civilian staff are “well-meaning do-gooders,” (Collins 2005: 187; Stankovic 2000: 64) and “drifters,” (Stankovic 2000: 65) with “scrawny beards, check shirts and hill-walking trousers” (Woolley 2004: 124).

This more dominant discourse can be interpreted in two ways. It could be understood as complementing the first discourse, as an attempt to reinforce the masculinity of peacekeeper masculinity. This is because the construction of peacekeeper masculinity could be said to involve considerable risk for soldiers as it involves breaking from the traditional masculine traits and practices of toughness, strength and aggression. There is therefore, for men enacting such a masculinity, a fear of being seen to be feminine. Feminising other men, therefore, is a discursive strategy to reinforce their own masculinity. Even when praising NGO workers, Rose demonstrates this fear of feminization; it is clear that he does not want his admiration for NGOs to be taken as approval of a softer, less manly way of doing things. When praising the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ dealings with the Balkan belligerents, he explicitly refers to the “toughness” of the response (Rose 1998: 44). Portraying journalists, politicians and aid workers as weak, effeminate and ineffectual, then, can be interpreted as a means of constructing a peacekeeper masculinity that is different from combat masculinity, but is also different from non-military masculinities – it is still tough. However, the feminising of aid workers, politicians and journalists could conversely be interpreted as evidence of the second discourse, that is, as demonstrating the continuing potency of traditional military masculinity for many soldiers. As with the admiration for the hypermasculinity of the local commanders, it perhaps reveals a loyalty to combat masculinity. The traits being disparaged – weakness, indecisiveness, ineffectiveness – are the opposite of those which make up the combat masculinity – toughness, action, results. Again, either way, what is clear is that there is a tension in British Army discourse between the two discourses – one constructing peacekeeper masculinity and the other reinforcing combat masculinity. Although there are signs of peacekeeper masculinity being constructed, the second discourse remains strong.

⁹¹ This was reinforced in informal conversations during field trip to Warminster, May 15 2006.

Male Civilians

Male civilians are rarely mentioned explicitly in British Army discourse on PSOs. Official discourse, as we have seen, is fairly silent on relations in general, and the autobiographies focus more on belligerents, presumably because that is who the soldiers come into contact with most and because belligerents are seen as more relevant and exciting to the story. Male civilians do get caught up in the “ancient hatreds” discourse referred to above, and as such, are portrayed as primitive and backward (Stankovic 2000: 71, 277). This could be seen to reinforce the discourse constructing peacekeeper masculinity as superior, yet this picture is complicated by another theme running through the discourse. Male civilians are at times described with much admiration and respect. This is not the same as local belligerents being described with admiration and respect, as it is not traits of toughness and aggression associated with combat masculinity that are respected. Here, local men are respected for other reasons, such as stoically putting up with the circumstances they find themselves in, actively working to change things for the better (see for example Rose 1998: 2). There are clear examples of empathy: Stankovic, for example, is quite traumatised by what the Bosnian people are going through, which is no doubt related to his Balkan heritage but also an expression of common humanity (Stankovic 2000: 84). Sometimes the soldiers go out of their way to avoid enacting the protector model, and seeming paternalistic or patronising. Woolley, for example, notes that when he is involved in donating goods to a refugee centre, “There was little evidence of noses being turned up; nevertheless, soldiers were conscious of the need not to appear charitable or patronizing. Indeed, knowing whether to be cheerfully happy or respectfully sombre was not easy to judge” (Woolley 2004: 119).

In more recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, there is evidence of both these constructions: hypermasculine warlords amidst a primitive, backward people and a more empathetic construction of people struggling against the odds. For example, the continuation of the ancient hatreds discourse can be seen in McLaughlin’s description of the core messages delivered to them about Iraq as they prepared to deploy. The official account was that Iraq contained:

A myriad of warring tribes that hated one another with a passion... vicious tribal disagreements... local battles had raged for decades...some of them hated one another to a murderous extreme... We were told we had no idea what religious intolerance was until we saw two opposing factions fall out – it made the

Catholic and Protestant disagreements in Northern Ireland seem like a schoolboy squabble (McLaughlin 2007: 146).

Holmes and Nicol record numerous soldiers' anecdotes about the ingratitude, laziness, and thieving nature of Iraqis (Holmes 2006; Nicol 2007). Field trips revealed that soldiers who had returned from Iraq were forthright in asserting that all Iraqis were thieves: "Hearts and minds is futile in Iraq though because of the Arab mentality. They're all thieving bastards. All of them. Women and children too!"⁹² There is also evidence of the feminization of local men in the words of soldiers accused involvement in the vicious beating of Iraqi civilians and torture of detainees in Basra, with both cases involving the use of sexualized violence in order to assert the superiority and masculinity of the soldiers (Branigan 2004; Gillan 2005; Norton-Taylor, Howard, and Jones 2006).

At the same time, there are also examples of the other discourse, of soldiers attempting to avoid the Othering of neo-colonial discourses and instead endeavouring to build relations of mutual respect. Collins, for example, thinks distributing sweets to Iraqi children is both "arrogant and demeaning" and bans his troops from doing this (Collins 2005: 179-180). McLaughlin befriends an Iraqi teacher and comments: "I would never look down on him and considered him to be my equal in every way" (McLaughlin 2007: 159). In Afghanistan, Docherty is determined to be humble in his role as advisor/trainer of Afghani army (Docherty 2007: 83). He is also explicit about his discomfort caused by the inadequacies of the operation in Afghanistan: in the market, for example, when trying to win hearts and minds of the locals despite the lack of demonstrable progress or reconstruction projects: "I'm suddenly aware of how grandiose and pompous I sound" (Docherty 2007: 127). These examples suggest that the situation is not as simple as the critique of Orford, Razack and Whitworth suggests. Male civilians are constructed in a variety of ways, some which reinforce the discourse of new-imperialism, some which undermine it.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the relations British soldiers are involved in on PSOs, in order to capture the way in which masculinities are constructed through interactions with others –

⁹² Informal conversation on field trip to Land Warfare Centre, Warminster, May 2006

both women and other men, both radical Others and non-radical Others. In terms of violence against women, it found both challenges to and reinforcements of traditional gendered dichotomies such as war/peace, protector/protected, active/passive, and hero/victim. The scarcity of data about women in British Army discourse on PSOs prevents the drawing of firm conclusions about the extent to which such challenges, such as the positioning of women as significant actors in the public arena and feminine skills as valuable for all, are becoming dominant or typical, or the extent to which they can be attributed to the PSO environment per se. Relations with other men also provided evidence which both reinforced and challenged the two discourses of the previous chapter: peacekeeping as masculine and peacekeeping as emasculating. Evidence of Othering which reinforces peacekeeper masculinity could be seen in the constructions of local commanders as hypermasculine, and the feminisation of other men in the PSO environment. But there were also various types of non-radical Othering. There was some evidence of envy and respect for hypermasculinity, indicating an allegiance to the combat masculinity traditionally hegemonic in the British Army. More positively, there was also evidence of civilians being positioned through relations of empathy, respect and equality. These examples suggest that the situation is not as simple as the critique of Orford, Razack and Whitworth suggests. The populations of countries in which peacekeepers intervene are not universally constructed as backward and primitive. The belligerents are not always hypermasculine, excessively violent warriors; the civilians are not always passive victims. Whilst some soldiers appear to remain unabashedly racist and ignorant of the colonial undertones of their constructions, others appear more aware of British imperial history, and the need to do things differently (Docherty 2007: 48; Rose 1998: 4). The implications of these contradictory findings will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Part Three: Analysis and Conclusions

Chapter Eight: Implications of Peacekeeper Masculinity – the Regendered Soldier?

The previous two chapters explored British Army discourse around PSOs and suggested that it contained a discourse of peacekeeper masculinity, a model of masculinity in which the practices of conflict resolution were masculinised. This chapter discusses the implications of this discourse – both in terms of what it might mean for achieving peace and security, and in terms of what it tells us about changing gender identities and relations. The first section summarises the model of peacekeeper masculinity and suggests that it represents a positive development, reducing the likelihood of sexual exploitation and violence and indicating a serious concern with conflict resolution. The progressiveness of peacekeeper masculinity is challenged by several scholars, however, who argue that the implications of peacekeeper masculinity are not nearly so benign. Feminists such as Anne Orford, Sherene Razack and Sandra Whitworth have drawn attention to the way that discourses of peacekeeper masculinity in other national contexts draw on gendered and racist colonial narratives, narratives which justify intervention and which are only coherent if we divide the world into civilized and non-civilized. The arguments of these scholars have been briefly introduced already, but are explored in the second section of this chapter in greater detail, both to demonstrate the strengths of their analysis and to critique their shortcomings. Indeed, the third section argues that these accounts take too monolithic a view of masculinity, and therefore neglect the potentially more progressive aspects of peacekeeper masculinity. This argument is developed in the context of the concept of “regendered militaries” (Cockburn and Hubic 2002) which has the potential to address the problems of PSOs and peacekeeper masculinity.

I: Peacekeeper Masculinity

A discourse runs through the master discourse of the British Army on PSOs linking the practices of PSOs to masculinity and thereby constructing a model of peacekeeper masculinity. In this discourse, conflict resolution practices are masculinised through a variety of strategies: the linkage of practices to terms which are conventionally associated

with masculinity; the privileging or valorisation of practices; the linkage of practices to men's bodies; and the feminisation of alternative practices. Masculinisation is most successful when a combination of these strategies are involved. In this discourse, conflict resolution practices such as communication, negotiation, consent building, moderation of the use of force, humanitarian activities, and the values of impartiality and sensitivity are linked to terms traditionally associated with masculinity, such as hard, tough, bravery, courage and heroism. Conflict resolution practices were privileged as more challenging, more demanding, and more rewarding than more traditional combat roles, rather than being discredited as the inferior aspect of the job. Practices of war and combat were feminised – discredited as the weaker, softer option, through being linked to that which has been conventionally associated with the feminine. The new linkages thus serve to construct a peacekeeper masculinity which is distinct from that associated with combat, the traditional hegemonic masculinity in the British Army.

This model is reinforced by several strategies of Othering found in the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity.⁹³ In particular, a dominant theme in the discourse is the way in which British soldiers construct their masculinity in relation to the hypermasculinity of local fighting men. Positioning these men as excessively violent, aggressive, mad and irrational serves to construct a peacekeeper masculinity that is controlled, civilised, intelligent and rational. Male and female civilians in the PSO environment are also sometimes constructed as violent, primitive and backward, further cementing the masculinity of British peacekeeping soldiers as controlled and rational. Civilians are also constructed as victims, which similarly positions them as backward, but in this construction, rather more passive and helpless than violent. This serves to construct peacekeeper masculinity as active and heroic, echoing the themes of soldiers as protectors long central to the discourses of war. These strategies of Othering differ slightly in their particular emphases, but they all serve to reinforce the construction of peacekeeper masculinity as rational and intelligent, communicative and sensitive, restrained and civilised, and heroic and humane.

⁹³ The model is also complicated by several other strategies of Othering, such as the construction of peacekeeper masculinity in relation to the non-military male actors in PSO environment. This will be discussed later in this chapter; here, the intention is to draw attention to the elements of the discourse which clearly construct peacekeeper masculinity.

What are the implications of this model of peacekeeper masculinity? Why does it matter? The discourse of peacekeeper masculinity is not the only discourse in the “master discourse” of the British Army on PSOs; indeed, it is not even the dominant one as there is much evidence of the traditional hegemonic model of military masculinity associated with the practices of combat.⁹⁴ However, there is enough evidence of this discourse to make it worth exploring the implications of its existence. As described, peacekeeper masculinity appears to be an improvement on combat masculinity, as it addresses some of the concerns of anti-militarist feminists outlined in the second chapter: soldiers enacting peacekeeper masculinity are arguably less likely to be involved in the problems of peacekeeping operations such as unchecked aggression towards civilians or sexual exploitation of women and girls. Furthermore, they are likely to make PSOs more successful, as the association of conflict resolution practices with masculinity means that soldiers will take them more seriously: if it is considered manly to be able to negotiate a ceasefire, to be able to build consent amongst a population, to control a situation without resorting to the use of force, to deliver aid or rebuild a school, then soldiers will be more motivated to complete such tasks successfully.

This positive view of peacekeeper masculinity is challenged, however, by several feminist scholars who suggest that such a model is neither new nor progressive; rather, ideas of a benign peacekeeper masculinity reflect and reinforce colonial narratives wherein more civilized nations have to bring democracy and human rights to barbaric and primitive peoples. If they are right, the implications of the emerging discourse of peacekeeper masculinity in the British Army needs to be treated with a great deal more scepticism than suggested hitherto.

II: Peacekeeper Masculinity and the New Imperialism

The discourse of peacekeeper masculinity is not unique to the British Army; several feminist scholars have noted the emergence of masculinities associated with PSOs in other national militaries. Sandra Whitworth and Sherene Razack, for example, both write about Canadian military masculinities and peacekeeping operations in *Men, Militarism and UN*

⁹⁴ The question of the extent to which peacekeeper masculinity challenges the hegemonic masculinity associated with the practices of combat needs further exploration. A definitive answer would depend on more extensive empirical investigation and cannot be attempted in this thesis. A few preliminary

Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis (Whitworth 2004) and *Dark Threats and White Knights: The Somalia Affair, Peacekeeping and the New Imperialism* (Razack 2004) respectively. Anne Orford has written about constructions of masculinity in the discourse of PSOs more generally, focusing on how international actors such as states, the UN and NATO are constructed as masculine in the discourse of media, legal and policy texts (Orford 1999). These scholars have been highly critical of the discourse of the seemingly more benign peacekeeper masculinity, viewing it as part of a more general western discourse of PSOs that is highly problematic. Some of the ideas of this critique of peacekeeping were introduced in the second chapter, where the feminist literature on peacekeeping was reviewed. Now that the existence of an embryonic peacekeeper masculinity in the British Army has been established, however, there is a need to address this critique in more detail.

The feminist critique is part of a broader critique of peacekeeping which has been developed within Critical Security Studies, and which takes as its starting point the profound inequalities that neo-liberal market economics have brought about between the metropolitan capitalist centres of the west and rest of the world (see for example Bellamy 2003; Duffield 2001; Pugh 2004; Rieff 2002; Thomas 2001). It argues that the neo-liberal market economy and its “human face” – poverty reduction strategies – promote the globalization of a top-down socio-economic model that constrains state spending on social benefits (Pugh 2004: 52). In this system, the rich get richer, while, in the peripheral areas of global economy, economic development has collapsed, often into brutal competition between warring factions (Duffield 2001: 2-5; Pugh 2004: 41). Intervention is the means by which the metropolitan capitalist centres try to control the system: PSOs are thus forms of “riot control” aimed at upholding the “liberal peace” and soldiers and humanitarians are the “trouble shooters of an international society that structures inequalities and fails to fulfil human needs” (Pugh 2004: 54). As Pugh argues:

The evolution of PSOs and the merger with humanitarianism has reflected and reinforced the structure of the world system, promoted the globalization of a particular ideology of good governance – the ‘liberal peace’ – and served as riot control when resistance has been encountered. The limits of the current forms of peacekeeping and humanitarianism lie in the inherent

suggestions, exploring some of the factors which seem to make the construction of peacekeeper masculinity more successful, will be returned to in the conclusion.

contradictions of a capitalist hegemony trying to keep the lid on instability. PSOs and humanitarianism deal with the manifestations of that instability, masking the extent to which the system fails to benefit large parts of the world (Pugh 2004: 53-4).

From this perspective, military interventions are primarily intended to sustain the neo-liberal system, a system which has played a crucial role in causing the conflicts in the first place. When PSOs are discussed in popular legal, media and policy discourses in the west, however, the role of neo-liberal market economics is neglected, and conflicts are presented as having causes rooted in ancient hatreds or problems associated with under-development; and intervention is presented as a manifestation of “the natural laws of economics, state creation and protection of human rights” (Duffield 2001: 109-117; Pugh 2004: 48). Terms such as “peace enforcement” and “multi dimensional peacekeeping” exist to occupy the moral high ground, suggesting a concern for order and security and that those intervening aim to maintain or create peace. In reality, such operations are biased and strategic: they are motivated by a variety of factors, including credibility, prestige, and upholding order, but not primarily saving lives (Pugh 2004: 48).

Feminist scholars have drawn on such critiques, but highlight the crucial role gender plays in the popular western discourses justifying PSOs. In portraying interventions as natural and benign, popular narratives of peacekeeping position the west and its peacekeepers as advanced, democratic and civilized, and the rest of the world as backward, chaotic and disordered. The narrative is thus one which echoes colonial discourses of civilizing processes which, as Edward Said has pointed out, are profoundly gendered. Demonstrating that much Western writing about Asia and the Middle East depicts the Orient as the irrational, weak and feminised Other, contrasted with the rational, strong, masculine West, Said argued that such false and romanticized images served as an implicit justification for Europe and America's colonial and imperial ambitions (Said 1978).

Narratives are how we understand the world: “there can be no intervention without a description of the locale in which intervention takes place or of the peoples involved in conflict. There can be no understanding of development policies without a description of who the underdeveloped are, where they differ from the developed West, and how they can transform their identity” (Hansen 2006: xvi). Narratives thus play a crucial role in creating inter-subjectivities and in justifying practices and policies. In narratives produced in

imperial contexts, the reader or spectator is invited to identify with a white male hero who is “associated with attributes including freedom, creativity, authority, civilization, power, democracy, sovereignty and wealth,” an identification strengthened by its opposition to a second essential character in the narrative, the object of the imperial gaze: the black, native or colonized subject (Orford 1999: 684-688; also see Silverman 1984). As such, colonial narratives involve the production of subjectivity – both personal and national – through racial differentiation as well as sexual. Attention to colonial narratives demonstrates that the oppression of the Other, whether it be native Americans, Africans, Asians or Antipodeans, has always been a resource for constructing white national manhood, and colonial projects have always depended on this racialised, imperial masculinity (Nagel 1998; Nelson 1998; Razack 2004). Promotions of tourism and the Empire, such as the World’s Fairs of the 1890s, “preached that white men’s manliness fuelled the civilizing imperial mission and in turn, that pursuing the imperial mission revitalized the nation’s masculinity” (Enloe 1989: 27). Constructions of British masculinity in particular were shaped by the history of Empire, where “the image of a lone, dashing Englishman dispensing justice, wisdom and righteous retribution on his brown subjects” (Rutherford 1997: 13; also see Dawson 1994) contributed to the idea that imperial manliness often required an Other who was backward and violent, and thus needed a firm hand – an “imperial mix of violence, governance and compassion” (Razack 2004: 63) – for his own good.

In the critical feminist scholarship of Orford, Razack and Whitworth, the gendered and racialised narrative of colonialism reappears whenever western nations are involved in PSOs (Orford 1999: 689; Razack 2004: 49; Whitworth 2004: 27). In the narratives of PSOs, areas of conflict continue to be portrayed as populated with people who are backward, primitive, and consumed with ancient hatreds. As such, Western nations have to do something about the chaos, the descent into tribalism, the massive human rights violations that are depicted as inherent traits of the global South. Through the feminization of the people and places of conflict, peacekeepers become the masculine guarantors of such values as peace, security, human rights, justice and freedom. It is in the continuation of the colonial and frontier myths of benevolent interventions in the name of civilization and progress that we can see the gendered and racialised nature of the construction of the western peacekeeper:

Men who achieve manhood through a national obligation to instruct less advanced Others perform a hegemonic masculinity in which they imagine themselves to be cowboys in ‘Indian country’,

surrounded by an ‘alien race’ that threatens to overwhelm (Razack 2004: 156).

As Razack insists, to discuss this narrative and its function is “not to deny that the conflicts of the post Cold War period have been bloody and terribly violent and do require intervention. What the hegemonic peacekeeping story accomplishes is to turn these conflicts into attributes of Third World states and Third World peoples, qualities that are somehow innate and unconnected either to colonial histories or to contemporary western dominance” (Razack 2004: 46). It is the construction of the west as the white male hero – as the civilized, advanced, rational, benevolent saviour – which disguises the reality of global international and economic relations:

Intervention discourse ignores almost completely the current historical context of rapid and massive global economic change within which security and humanitarian crises emerge. The tendency to focus only on humanitarian aspects of international intervention contributes to the image of internationalism as the site of progressive values. The image constructs the identity of the international community as active, humane saviours intervening to help people in trouble spots, obscuring other sets of relations between those who identify as the international community and those targeted for intervention (Orford 1999: 692)

Discourses which construct the international community and its peacekeepers as “active, humane saviours” draw on the gendered dichotomy of the protector/protected, familiar from the discourses of war. Such constructions serve to justify interventions: “peacekeeping also tells us a great deal about who conducts peacekeeping missions (“us”) and who needs peacekeeping missions (“them”). Inherent in this view, the well-ordered rational, liberal free market North brings peace in a variety of ways, not least by delivering through peacekeeping the very principles of rationality, liberalism, and free market economics so clearly absent in the anarchic global South” (Whitworth 2004: 25).

The gendered dichotomy of humanitarian saviour and the helpless victim makes it seem reasonable and right for western states to intervene in conflicts as if they had nothing to do with the cause of the conflict in the first place, whereas this is rarely the case. “Warlords and ethnic nationalism, indisputable scourges of our age, are often pictured as though they have risen up from the landscape itself and not out of histories in which the West has featured as a

colonizing power” (Razack 2004: 16). What is obscured in this story is the legacy of colonialism and the Cold War – “authoritarianism, the supremacy of security in politics, surplus armaments, and a tradition of politics of polarization” (Pieterse 1998: 236) and the role of neo-liberal markets. For example, many Balkan national leaders, including Milosevic, came to power as the IMF’s shock therapy stabilisation programme radically altered the nature of Yugoslav constitutional and political arrangements, causing significant and unstable new alliances in the region (Orford 1997). The constant linking of violence to local passions and chaotic nationalism, evident in the previous chapters, masks the “more far-reaching forms of violence that are now conducted through massive restructuring and social upheaval in the name of free trade or economic liberalism” (Orford 1999: 710). As Razack puts it, “history is evacuated and the simplest of story lines remains: the more civilized states have to keep less civilized states in line” (Razack 2004: 48).

These important feminist critiques of PSOs prevent the drawing of any straightforward conclusions as to the progressive nature of peacekeeper masculinity. In their critiques, however, the suggestion above that peacekeeper masculinity is a positive development because of the decreased risk of violence and sexual exploitation and the increased likelihood of soldiers taking PSOs seriously is left unexplored. The next section looks more closely at each of the accounts, not to counter their arguments about the underlying role of neo-liberal economics in causing inequalities nor to deny that these constructions of masculine white heroes and feminised and racialised Others exist, but to suggest that they each neglect some more positive aspects of peacekeeper masculinity.

Orford argues that the appeal of the narrative of new interventionism depends on the linked portrayals of masculinity, whiteness and internationalism (Orford 1999: 700). She notes, however, that it is not a singular notion of masculinity but a “series of related images of masculinity” that dominate the narratives (Orford 1999: 692). Whilst stories about the need for the UN Security Council to intervene in Kosovo draw on images of white masculinity as tough, aggressive and decisive, for example, stories about restoring peace and tackling famine in Somalia draw more on the image of the firm but fair, benevolent patriarch; furthermore, stories about the US working together with the UN portray the partnership as a marriage, with the US as sensitive family man (Orford 1999: 692-696). A variety of masculinities are used to justify intervention, Orford thus suggests, not all associated with toughness and aggression. Orford draws on Susan Jeffords’ analysis of masculinities in

films of the 1980s and 1990s in order to make sense of the multiplicity of masculinities (Jeffords 1994). Jeffords argues that in this era, portrayals of less militaristic and more family oriented versions of masculinity are often found in popular culture, particularly films, and whilst these alternative versions of masculinity appear to offer a critique of the more violent and militaristic version, in fact they are based upon many of the same images and assumptions. The only difference, for Jeffords, is that violence is resorted to in the name of family, home or nation, as opposed to competition or machismo (Jeffords 1994: 142-3): “Militarism, dominance, nationalism, individualism and violence continue to be at the heart of masculinity” (Jeffords 1994: 191-2). The varieties of masculinity are thus collapsed back into one model that is eternally linked to militarism, dominance and violence. Orford uses Jefford’s arguments to suggest that something similar happens in the narratives of PSOs: ultimately, there is little difference in the varieties of masculinity – all constructions serve to successfully reproduce the narrative of the new interventionism (Orford 1999: 702-3). The implication is thus that peacekeeper masculinity is a kind of smokescreen, suggesting that there has been progressive change in masculinities, whilst the underlying relations of domination continue. Orford concludes that there is “no space” within dominant narratives of intervention to define alternative ways for the international community to act, to consider the effects of the hero’s action on the human targets of intervention, or to treat targets as having human agency: the images drawn upon always involve the white male hero, and the masculinity that is enacted is always the “militaristic, competitive, irresponsible and brutal self of white masculinity” (Orford 1999: 702-3).

Whilst agreeing with much of Orford’s analysis, I contest this assessment that there is “no space,” arguing instead that there is “some space:” some space to see alternative masculinities being constructed which are not inevitably connected to militarism; and some space to treat both the soldiers and the civilians in areas of conflict as having agency and the ability to build more democratic relations. Even within the dominant narratives, there are examples of alternative masculinities which cannot be collapsed back into the “militaristic, competitive, irresponsible and brutal self of white masculinity.” This is to give too monolithic an account of masculinities which is at odds with our understandings of the complexity of masculinity construction, and contradicts Orford’s own findings of multiple masculinities in the narratives.

Razack focuses on the Somalia Affair, when Canadian peacekeepers tortured and killed a sixteen year old Somali boy, Shidane Arone, an event in which “modern peacekeeping revealed its sordid colonial origins” (Razack 2004: 4). She argues that this violence has to be understood through its racial and colonial contexts: the overriding narrative of peacekeeping – understood by peacekeepers themselves – is that white armies are in Africa in order to keep the natives in line. As such, she asserts “peacekeeping today is a kind of war, a war waged between those who constitute themselves as civilized, modern and democratic against those who are constituted as savage, tribal, and immoral” (Razack 2004: 85). It appears as if, by building her argument around examples of peacekeeper violence, Razack is blind to any examples of more positive peacekeeper behaviour. By this, I do not mean that she fails to notice that not all peacekeepers are involved in violence. My argument is not based on the idea that peacekeeper violence is the exceptional behaviour of the “few bad apples” and therefore should not be used to make generalised comments about PSOs. Razack acknowledges that not all soldiers were involved in the acts of torture perpetrated by some; her argument is rather that the “profoundly racially structured” narrative whereby “we are hailed as civilized beings who inhabit ordered democracies, citizens who are called to look after, instruct or defend ourselves against, the uncivilized Other” (Razack 2004: 155) structures all peacekeeping encounters. The moral universe of peacekeeping is one where people are split into those who must be saved and those who must do the saving, limiting “the extent to which we can even begin to think about the humanity of Others; *our very participation depends on consigning whole groups of people to the category of those awaiting assistance into modernity*” (Razack 2004: 155) [my italics].

It is this overwhelmingly determinist account that needs to be problematised. It leads Razack to conclude that when Romeo Dallaire, the Canadian General who led the doomed UN mission in Rwanda, reflects that “All humans are humans. There are no humans more human than others. That’s it.” that he is also participating in damaging imperial constructions:

We can believe as Dallaire does, that there are no humans more human than Others, and still understand the world as made up of those needing assistance and those providing it. True on one level, the paradigm of saving the Other nevertheless precludes an examination of how we have contributed to their crises and where our responsibility lies. It is a paradigm that allows us to maintain our sense of superiority. With its emphasis on pity and

compassion, saving the Other can be a position that discourages respect and true belief in the personhood of Others (Razack 2004: 155).

While Razack is right to note the effects of colonial paradigm, the inclusion of Dallaire's words to exemplify the paradigm makes any ethical position impossible. Dallaire's statement that no humans are more human than others could equally be an attempt to break out of the Othering that Razack rightly condemns. Interestingly, when turning to suggest ways in which we can attempt to act morally in the New World Order, Razack contradicts her own assertion that our participation always depends on consigning whole groups of people as awaiting modernity. She resists the conclusion that peacekeeping interventions should never be embarked upon, arguing that this would be as immoral as intervening in the imperialist belief that it is "for their own good." There may be some situations where intervention is appropriate and, "at such moments, we must go, but how we go is critical" (Razack 2004: 164). This means being more self-aware and self-critical; "not when equipped with nothing beyond information of an encyclopaedia," or when "convinced ours is civilizing mission" (Razack 2004: 164). Rather than "take refuge behind stock phrases about how nice we are," we need to "develop great vigilance about attitudes and practices that flow from a universe structured by a civilized North and uncivilized South" (Razack 2004: 165). My point here is to suggest that this is what Dallaire's words suggest: an attempt to focus on constructing relations of equality, rather than hierarchical relations where "we" save and civilise "them".

Like Razack, Whitworth focuses on the Canadian peacekeepers' violence in Somalia, along with a case study of UN involvement in sexual exploitation in Cambodia. Again, Whitworth is not arguing that all peacekeepers are violent, and that is not what is problematic about her account. Whitworth is also not suggesting that by exposing this more unsavoury side of peacekeeping, she is uncovering the "true story" of peacekeeping; rather, she reasons that this story needs to be heard in order to balance the official picture of peacekeeping (Whitworth 2004: 2). This is particularly important in a nation such as Canada, she argues, where the national self-image of "a liberal internationalist state and neutral arbiter of conflicts was built in part on the myth of a benign and altruistic military" (Whitworth 2004: 87). Again, Whitworth's argument is vital in terms of exploring the way in which "peacekeeping has become one of the contemporary vehicles through which western values, and in particular liberal democratic market ideology, is delivered to "backward, conflict-

prone” countries of the global south” (Whitworth 2004: 18). However, her case at times depends on her setting up an image/reality dichotomy whereby the image of the Canadian military is benign and altruistic whereas the reality is that soldiers are inherently racist and violent. She explores “how Canadian representations of nation and military depend on the benign and altruistic image of Canada as peacekeeper – an image that is fundamentally at odds with the roles soldiers are expected, and indeed were created, to perform” (Whitworth 2004: 86). She argues that in Somalia, Canadian soldiers, so often limited to traditional peacekeeper roles, were finally able “to act like real soldiers,” resulting in the violent events such as the torture and killing of Arone, demonstrating “how precarious this image of Canada and how flimsy this myth of a wholesome military really were” (Whitworth 2004: 87).

This image/reality dichotomy leads to too monolithic an account of military masculinities. Statements such as “the recipe for creating soldiers involves selecting for and reinforcing aggressive behaviour; it can also entail an explosive mix of misogyny, racism and homophobia, coupled with a siege mentality” (Whitworth 2004: 99) and the account of the creation of soldiers through rituals and myths (Whitworth 2004: 151-173) neglect the role of individual agency and resistance in the construction of gender identities and the subversive potential of subordinate masculinities. Although Whitworth acknowledges the multiplicity of masculinities, and is careful to avoid arguing that violence is a biologically determined trait of men, her portrait of military masculinities is a fairly deterministic account of overt socialisation which results in one form of military masculinity: racist, misogynist, and violent.

All three authors thus demonstrate a tendency to monolithic accounts of masculinity, emphasising the structural factors in the construction of gender identities at the expense of individual agency. As such, they neglect some of the potentially more positive aspects of peacekeeper masculinity. In Orford’s case, the emphasis on structure is seen in the sole focus on western media, legal and policy discourses so that what gets missed is some of the complexity and nuance that comes from including military discourse and a focus on how soldiers themselves construct their masculinities. Razack and Whitworth both include military discourse, including the reflections of soldiers, but also allow structural factors to dominate – in Razack’s case, through the argument that colonial narratives always inevitably structure peacekeeping encounters; in Whitworth’s, through the implication that soldiers are

moulded from above, with little opportunity to construct military masculinities other than those that are racist, misogynist and violent.

To make these points is not to suggest that their arguments can therefore be discounted – it is rather to suggest that they can be refined. In particular, I am not arguing that their points do not apply in the case of the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity found in the British Army. The discourse of British peacekeeper masculinity explored in the previous two chapters contains many examples of the dynamics highlighted by this feminist critique. The constructions of the Other as backward, disordered and chaotic, in order to position peacekeeper masculinity as the white, male hero and the international community as advanced, progressive and humanitarian, are certainly apparent in both official and unofficial sources of PSO discourse of the British Army. There are also, however, disruptions: peacekeeper masculinity is not always constructed in such ways. One of the things that all three authors neglect – despite acknowledging the existence of multiple masculinities both in a theoretical sense and at various points in their empirical studies – is the potential significance of soldiers associating the practices of conflict resolution with masculinity. The idea of a benign and altruistic military masculinity that all three identify in popular media and legal discourses is not just an image that exists at the public level, masking the ugly reality of how soldiers behave. The exploration of British Army discourse suggests that peacekeeper masculinity is something that soldiers themselves articulate, identify with and enact. Moreover, they do so in ways that do not necessarily reinforce colonial narratives of the civilised west coming to the rescue – with force if need be – of the backward, uncivilised Other. In the next section, I argue that the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity has two progressive elements which are worth exploring. Firstly, the way in which peacekeeper masculinity challenges some of the traditional gender dichotomies found in western discourses around war, combat and militarism, and secondly, the ways in which it is sometimes constructed around relations of empathy and mutual respect, rather than always in relation to a racialised and feminised Other.

III: Taking Peacekeeper Masculinity Seriously

Peacekeeper Masculinity and the Challenge to Gendered Dichotomies

The discourse of peacekeeper masculinity is not just a matter of an image; it involves actually embodied soldiers linking the practices of conflict resolution to their masculine

identities. As such, peacekeeper masculinity involves significant challenges to traditional gender dichotomies. Associating the practices of conflict resolution – such as negotiation, withholding force and sensitivity – with masculinity, destabilizes and disrupts traditional associations of masculinity with aggression, force and lack of emotion, and femininity with negotiation, peace and sensitivity. Traditional gendered dichotomies play a crucial role in the perpetuation of militarism and war by valorising “tough” attitudes and approaches and discrediting peaceful ones. Peacekeeper masculinity’s challenge to these traditional gendered dichotomies demonstrates their artificiality; an achievement which is a crucial goal of many feminist strategies for gender equality and peace and therefore a challenge which should not be too quickly ignored and dismissed.

That gender has an element of fluidity has been well-rehearsed: in the examples of farming and secretarial work, as well as practices such as obedience, subservience and attention to dress detail in the military, it was noted that as things become more valuable, they tend to be linked to masculinity, or, as women are permitted to be involved in practices previously the domain of men and considered masculine, the same practices become devalued, and considered feminine. The fluidity of gender has a more positive aspect, however; it is because of its fluidity that there is potential for change in gender relations. "Man" and "woman" are simultaneously empty and overflowing categories: “Empty because they have no ultimate, transcendent meaning. Overflowing because even when they appear to be fixed, they still contain within them alternative, denied, or suppressed definitions” (Scott 1986: 1074). This is not to suggest that there is infinite fluidity in how masculinity and femininity get defined, or that change is therefore easy to effect. Existing definitions of appropriate masculine and feminine behaviour, together with physical bodies, act as powerful constraints on the fluidity. Gendered dichotomies have structured western language and thought for so long, many attributes or practices seem natural or inherent to men and women; the discussion of the association of masculinity with combat in chapter two illustrates this well. Nonetheless, the fact that gendered dichotomies are not fixed opens up the possibility of change. Deconstructing gendered dichotomies by highlighting their artificiality and fluidity is a central strategy of many feminists who espouse a form of poststructuralist feminism. Joan Scott, for example, writes that “we need a refusal of the fixed and permanent quality of the binary opposition, a genuine historicization and deconstruction of the terms of sexual difference” (Scott 1986: 1066).

The strategy of deconstructing gendered dichotomies is often seen as moving the feminist project beyond the strategies of inclusion and reversal (Ferguson 1993: 3; Hooper 2000: 48-52; Squires 1999: 3; Zalewski 2000). The strategy of inclusion is associated with liberal feminism and equality politics, and aims to include women in areas from which they are currently excluded – it claims gender ought to be non-pertinent to politics. The strategy of reversal is associated with radical feminists, and claims that more should be done to recognise a specifically female gendered identity, to value that which has traditionally been disparaged. Deconstruction, or displacement, aims to “destabilise and deconstruct the discursive regimes that engender the subject” – it purports to reveal the extent to which gendered identities themselves are products of particular political discourses (Squires 1999: 3). Deconstruction is thus the strategy which is necessary if we are to go beyond arguing for an increase in women soldiers or arguments which suggest that women should take control of all international conflict resolution efforts because of their natural abilities for peacemaking. Deconstruction is about being attentive to the way in which things in the social world are often constructed to seem as if they are opposites when they are actually interdependent and exposing this (Peterson and True 1998; Scott 1990: 137; Squires 1999: 226; Zalewski 1998: 862). As such, deconstruction enables us to tackle the problems associated with military masculinities – the perpetuation of war and militarism, the failures of peacekeeping – in more radical and long-lasting ways.

Yet, there are limits to the strategy of deconstruction, echoing the limits to the poststructuralist perspective in general (see chapter four). It implies that there is limitless fluidity, that all aspects of gendered identity are able to be de-linked from their association with physical embodiment, which as suggested above, is not always possible or even desirable. Moreover, deconstruction, with its focus on challenging accepted meanings, destabilizing dichotomies, and creating uncertainty, is more of a critical tool than a strategy of political change. As Squires puts it:

It has become a matter of some political concern that displacement alone might not provide an adequate basis from which to engage in the process of reconceptualization. Reconceptualization is a utopian project; displacement is a deconstructive technique (Squires 1999: 230).

As with poststructuralist approaches more generally, the emancipatory or progressive agenda is neglected. Given the situation of those in poverty and conflict, we need a form of deconstruction which overcomes this problem: deconstruction which is not just an analytical tool, but also a political project. In order to move beyond deconstruction and displacement, hierarchical gendered dichotomies need to be replaced with more democratic relations. This brings us onto the next contribution of peacekeeper masculinity: its potential to be constructed through non-radical Others.

Peacekeeper Masculinity and the Possibility of Non-radical Others

The second element of peacekeeper masculinity discourse which I argue merits further investigation is the way in which peacekeeper masculinity is sometimes constructed through relations of empathy and mutual respect. Although there are many examples of the dynamic identified by Orford, Razack and Whitworth, where peacekeeper masculinity is constructed in relation to the racialised, feminised Other, there are also disruptions to such a narrative: the “non-radical Othering” suggested by Hansen (see chapter four). Hansen argues that identities are always relationally constituted – through Others – but that this does not mean that the Other is always a “radically different and threatening Other” (Hansen 2006: 37) but rather, there can be degrees of difference and Otherness. Paying attention to the empirical complexity of identity construction is important, because particular constructions of identity underpin and legitimise policies – such as peacekeeping interventions – and have material impacts on the resulting groups.

Orford, Razack and Whitworth do not distinguish between different types of Othering: in their accounts, all Othering is radical, and serves to position the West and its peacekeepers as superior to those in areas wherein they intervene. Closer attention to the nuances of British Army discourse, however, reveals that this is not always the case. Some of the ways that peacekeeper masculinity is constructed in British Army discourse exemplify non-radical Othering. In the respect shown to local women as significant actors in their own communities, for example, or in the empathy felt towards the civilians surviving through adversity, British soldiers, on occasion, participate in alternative, more positive discursive constructions of the Other. Orford, Razack and Whitworth may respond, however, that these arguments do not detract from the main force of their critique. Even if peacekeeper masculinity challenges some of the traditional gendered dichotomies which have perpetuated war and militarism, and even if it is not always constructed through radical Others, its

construction enables the west to claim the moral high ground whilst distracting from its role in causing and exacerbating global inequality and conflict. The overall impact of a discourse of peacekeeper masculinity is to justify interventions which serve to uphold the liberal peace to the benefit of the west; the gains made in terms of highlighting the fluidity of gender are irrelevant.

Whilst justifying intervention may be part of the overall effect of peacekeeper masculinity discourse – which I agree raises significant issues for anti-militarist feminists – it is not self-evident that this means that the more positive aspects of peacekeeper masculinity need be discounted. The association of masculinity with the practice of conflict resolution is such a fundamental departure from the association of masculinity with combat, and such a significant example of a traditional gendered dichotomy being reversed, it would be premature to dismiss it without further analysis. Furthermore, in terms of peacekeeper violence and sexual exploitation, it matters whether the soldiers involved in PSOs are enacting peacekeeper masculinity rather than combat masculinity. This arguably remains the case even if one accepts the critique of PSOs and the argument that much more radical solutions are needed if the root causes of many complex political emergencies are to be tackled. The suggestion here, therefore, is that we may need to consider both long and short term approaches. Whilst highlighting the west's role in causing and exacerbating global inequality and conflict is vital, and challenging the structures of global neo-liberalism is important for all those, including anti-militarist feminists, interested in global peace and justice, it remains the case that these structures are likely to be with us in the foreseeable future. In the short term, then, working towards peace, security and justice for those in areas of conflict may well involve a role for PSOs, and, if this is so, peacekeeper masculinity is an advance on those masculinities associated with combat.

This argument gains some support from the fact that women and feminist organisations in areas of conflict often desperately want the military intervention of peacekeeping soldiers. There is a sense in which arguing that the better, more ethical course of action is the inevitably slower one of tackling the global economic structures of neo-liberal markets is a betrayal of these women who might argue that they cannot wait that long. Whitworth herself comments that many Cambodian women welcomed the arrival of peacekeepers, and Cockburn and Hubic's research with Bosnian women's organisations reveals that they

valued international peacekeepers (Cockburn and Hubic 2002; Whitworth 2004).⁹⁵ When this desire for international peacekeepers is examined further, however, what is clear is that women in areas of conflict welcome certain aspects of a military presence but not others. Whitworth notes that of all the Cambodian women she spoke to, not a single woman wished the UN had not come to Cambodia at all, but all wished the UN had done things better (Whitworth 2004: 2). Similarly, the Bosnian women in Cockburn and Hubic's research appreciated the security provided by military peacekeepers, but at the same time, were frustrated by certain things. The women articulated a complex range of attributes and practices which they wanted to see from a peacekeeping force, including a more gender conscious policy of recognition and respect, accessibility and communication, co-operation and partnership, sensitivity to local culture and humanity and warmth along with the military assertiveness required for the tasks of demilitarization, weapons collection, landmine clearance, protection and the arrest of war criminals. As Cockburn and Hubic suggest, then, the request was not for soldiers per se; rather, the implicit demand was for a "regendered notion of the soldier:"

The women are clearly not saying 'feminize the military'. On the other hand, they are just as clearly not admirers of Rambo. They are not saying 'we love your macho ways'. They are rather asking the military to 'act strong' but simultaneously lower their defences and be open and responsive (Cockburn and Hubic 2002: 116).

Regendered Soldiers and Regendered Militaries

In the light of the argument that military intervention might well be the best anti-militarist feminist option in the short term, Cockburn and Hubic's concepts of the "regendered soldier" and "regendered militaries" are worth further exploration and development. Of particular interest is the way in which the concept of the regendered military challenges traditional gendered dichotomies in a way which arguably involves both deconstruction and, crucially, something which could be described as reconstruction. Moreover, it is based on gender relations of equality, democracy and respect, built, in other words, through non-radical Othering. As such, it builds on some of the progressive elements of peacekeeper masculinity, and represents an important feminist vision for tackling conflict and poverty and

⁹⁵ Recent media reports from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Darfur include the testimony of women who specifically request peacekeeping soldiers.

the inequalities of gender relations. As the vision is not yet a reality, Cockburn and Hubic articulate what they mean by regendered militaries with a list of questions:

Can we create a new soldier identity that is available to both women and men? A soldier who is seen as, is expected to be, and feels, on the one hand assertive, competent and courageous; and on the other relational, responsive and caring? Can a peacekeeping soldier, in other words, embody some good 'feminine' qualities, without sullying or exploiting them? Can s/he keep desirable masculine traits, while throwing out some of the less desirable ones that have often been associated with militarism? And can s/he do these things without losing operational effectiveness?

Can we create a military culture in which democratic equality between individuals is valued, in which authority does not mean tyranny, orders may sometimes be questioned – but one that nonetheless produces soldiers who are effective in facing danger and disarming violence? Can we create a military culture that is respectful of women as people – but (even more difficult) respectful also of things usually associated with femininity, such as domestic life and the nurturing of relationship? Can this military culture respond creatively to soldiers' distress and trauma, not require the suppression of feelings of weakness and fear, allow for the exploration of values and choices? Can it allow for bonding between men that is not based on the rejection, diminishing and abuse of women and femininity? Or predicated on the despising of less militarized forms of masculinity? And indeed, can it allow for non-sexualised friendship and bonding between men and women? (Cockburn and Hubic 2002: 117-8).

The analysis of British Army discourse in the preceding chapters indicates that the British Army is some way from this vision – the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity itself falls short, and it is only a minority discourse within the “master discourse.” Nonetheless, peacekeeper masculinity, through its challenges to traditional gendered dichotomies and its non-radical Othering, embodies progress towards this goal.

The idea of regendered soldiers and militaries goes further than deconstruction because as well as highlighting the artificiality of gendered dichotomies, it discusses how alternatives can be created. Although there is little indication that a regendered military would be easy to build, the concept enables us to start to conceptualise more multiple, shifting and fluid gender roles in a military context. What is particularly interesting, in the light of the

discussion about the feminist strategy of deconstruction above, is that the construction of regendered soldiers and militaries involves modified versions of the strategies of inclusion and reversal. Central to Cockburn and Hubic's vision of a regendered military is an increase in women soldiers (a similar argument is made in Ruddick 1983). However, this is not the classic liberal feminist argument that equality demands that women can and should be able to do anything a man can do; nor is it the classic radical feminist argument that women's particular skills and abilities for conflict resolution make them necessary for successful PSOs. As Cockburn and Hubic make clear, a regendered military is not one in which women do the "womanly stuff" and men "act tough": "It would be wrong because if we wish to change male cultures for the better we should not exempt women from, and load exclusively onto men, responsibility for wielding just and necessary violence" (Cockburn and Hubic 2002: 116). Instead, a regendered military would be one made up of men and women in equal numbers, enacting roles that are neither masculinized nor feminized; a regendered soldier is a peacekeeper identity equally open to women and men, which equally values 'masculine' and 'feminine' traits so much so that they cease to be masculine and feminine.

The problem with the liberal strategy is that it does nothing to challenge the nature of the institution; meanwhile, the radical strategy feminises PSOs and the practices of conflict resolution, and, by reinforcing the link between women and peace, limits what women can do and be. In a regendered military, all soldiers valorise conflict resolution without fear of feminisation. One could argue that if traditional gendered dichotomies are being dismantled so that there are fluid and shifting roles which are neither masculine nor feminine, the actual numbers of men and women matters less. Why is an increase in women soldiers necessary, given the risks of the strategies of inclusion and reversal? Cockburn and Hubic do not explicitly address this, but I argue that the shift towards regendered militaries cannot happen without increasing the numbers of women soldiers because the connection between masculinities and femininities and male and female bodies cannot be discounted. Female bodies need to be involved in 'masculine' activities in order to begin the process of destabilising their definition as masculine. This is not to argue that the fluid and shifting roles of regendered militaries are likely to be brought about by the increase in women soldiers alone, but it is one way of moving militaries in this direction. Much of the fear and resistance to the strategies of inclusion and reversal is linked to the ways in which neither institutions nor naturalised stereotypes about gender are challenged (Enloe 2007: 74-87). As

regendered militaries involve challenging the traditional gendered dichotomies which underpin the institutions of the military and war, these fears are unnecessary. In other words, as the institution being envisaged here is one of fluid and shifting gender roles, focused on conflict resolution and constructing relations of empathy and mutual respect, it is a radically different institution from current militaries; as such, many of the arguments against women soldiers become irrelevant.

Peacekeeper masculinity can be seen as going beyond deconstruction in the sense that not only does it displace the traditional gendered dichotomy of masculine war/feminine peace, it creates the new linkage of masculine peacekeeping. It thus challenges one of the subtle but important mechanisms by which war and militarism are privileged over peace and non-violence, and enables peace and non-violence to be taken more seriously. It is also somewhat problematic, however, as, at the same time as challenging one aspect of traditional gendered dichotomies – the association of masculinity with war – it reinforces another – the privileging of that which is associated with masculinity. Moreover, in the cases where peacekeeper masculinity is constructed in relation to feminised, racialised and/or hypermasculinised Others, the gendered dichotomy is merely replaced by a different one. The traditional gendered dichotomy of masculine war/feminine peace is replaced by masculinised heroic peacekeepers from civilised lands/feminised victims from backward lands of chaos. Although this aspect of reversal is a step towards more fluid and shifting gender identities in the military, it cannot be the answer to addressing gender inequalities and the problems of militarism, war and conflict.

Regendered militaries resolve this problem. They involve not just turning the dichotomy upside down, but actually dismantling the hierarchical nature of gendered dichotomies altogether. This can be seen in the emphasis on soldiers being “relational, responsive and caring” and creating a military culture which is respectful of women and femininity. Although Cockburn and Hubic do not talk in terms of non-radical Othering, this description of the sort of gender relations involved in regendered soldiers and militaries amounts to the same thing: relations of democracy, mutual respect and equality. There is an important difference between relations that are respectful, responsive and empathetic and those that are about protecting, saving and rescuing: although all could be constructed as positive, the former are arguably relations that are found between equals, whereas the latter construct hierarchical relations. This is not necessarily problematic in all contexts, but in

peacekeeping contexts, the hierarchical relations continue an imperial discourse which is highly problematic. Regendered militaries involve by definition what peacekeeper masculinity within the British Army only occasionally accomplishes: the construction of gender identities through relations of democracy, equality and respect.

The importance of non-radical Othering does not just concern the construction of more equal gender relations: to pick up on an earlier point, particular constructions of identity underpin and legitimise particular policies (Hansen 2006: 36). When people in areas of intervention are positioned in non-radical ways, such as when women are presented as important political actors or men are presented as equals working hard for change, it perhaps does not change the overall policy – the decision to embark on a PSO has already been taken. It does, however, alter the character of that intervention. The dynamic identified by Orford, Razack and Whitworth is disrupted, and the endeavour becomes one of equals working together to resolve conflict.

I began this section by suggesting that, given that PSOs may be necessary in the short-term, until the longer-term project of tackling the role of neo-liberal markets in causing inequalities and conflict is achieved, regendered militaries would constitute an important improvement on current militaries. This further exploration of the concept of regendered militaries, however, demonstrates that the idea of regendered militaries carrying out PSOs would not merely be a short term solution but contains the seeds of more radical change. As regendered militaries by definition involve peacekeepers constructing relations of mutual respect, equality and empathy, they could start to undo some of the damage of colonial legacies and neo-liberal market economics at the micro level. Furthermore, by challenging the traditional gendered dichotomies of war discourse, the entire symbolic structure which makes war and militarism so hard to challenge is dismantled. As Cockburn argues in a different context, what appear to be quite limited initiatives or policies often contain within them the potential for more transformatory change. In her study of Equal Opportunities in a High Street retail organisation, she argues that although its short term aims are the minimising of bias in recruitment and promotion procedures, “at its longest, its most ambitious and most progressive it has to be recognised as being a project of transformation for organisations,” because even the short term agenda “brings into view the nature and purpose of institutions and the processes by which the power of some groups over others in institutions is built and renewed” (Cockburn 1989: 218). In other words, what might seem

like limited progress, resulting from strategies of inclusion and reversal, *cannot but* force us to look wider issues of how power structures institutions. In this case, the changes involved in forming regendered militaries prompt engagement with both the material and symbolic gender structures underpinning militarism and war. Although tackling such structures is by no means easy, short term agendas need not be written off as futile or as making long term change less likely.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the implications of peacekeeper masculinity. It discussed the criticisms of those who argue that peacekeeper masculinity is part of a neo-colonial discourse of peacekeeping and humanitarian interventions which enables the west or ‘international community’ to claim the moral high ground whilst doing little to tackle the underlying causes of global inequality and conflict. It argued, however, that there are also more positive implications stemming from the way that peacekeeper masculinity challenges traditional gendered dichotomies and is at times constructed through relations of mutual respect, empathy and equality, not hierarchical relations or radical Othering. Rather than ignoring these challenges, there is potential to build on them, as a regendered military with more fluid shifting gender roles could be an important contribution to tackling conflict – in both the short and the long term. The following chapter goes on to consider what we can learn from these arguments about peacekeeper masculinity in terms of gender identities and relations more generally. As such, it attempts to generalise from this case in order to develop the theoretical arguments found in gender studies, particularly the work of Connell, relating to the issue of if and how change in gender relations is possible.

Chapter Nine: Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity – Engendering Change

This chapter asks what we can learn from the case of the British Army discourse of peacekeeper masculinity for theories about gender more broadly. It argues that the concepts of peacekeeper masculinity and the regendered soldier have interesting implications for how we understand and bring about change in gender identities and relations. The argument is developed by relating the discussion of peacekeeper masculinity and regendered soldiers to the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is a central concept in the field of Gender Studies, and has been applied in a wide variety of contexts. By discussing the case of peacekeeper masculinity in terms of theoretical debates about hegemonic masculinity, this chapter will clarify the question of how progressive change is possible in gender relations in other contexts, thus contributing to the development of gender theory.

The first section recaps the concept of hegemonic masculinity, fleshing it out in the context of the British Army. The second section goes on to discuss the theoretical question of how hegemonic masculinity can ever be challenged: if hegemonic masculinity is not a personality type or a syndrome, but rather a more fluid construct, constantly shifting and adapting in order to retain power, can it ever be eradicated? I discuss three examples from the literature of gender theorists debating the issue in three different contexts: Charlotte Hooper's exploration of international business masculinities (Hooper 2000); Steve Niva's discussion of US military masculinities in the context of the First Gulf War (Niva 1998); and Demetrakis Demetriou's case study of homosexual masculinities in western culture (Demetriou 2001). I also discuss the work of Connell, who first developed the concept of hegemonic masculinity with colleagues Carrigan and Lee in the 1980s, and has gone on to develop it in several works in masculinities studies since then (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell 1987; 1995; 2000b; 2002a; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). In the third section, I apply the findings of the specific case of this thesis – the emergence of a discourse of peacekeeper masculinity in the British Army – to the theoretical debate.

I: Hegemonic Masculinity in the British Army

The term hegemonic masculinity was coined in order to express the way in which, in a context of multiple masculinities, one form always dominates the hierarchy (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985; Connell 1987; 1995; 2002a). Hegemonic masculinity is a cultural ideal, rather than a description of the personalities of the majority or most powerful men. It is the form that commands the most respect, and it influences how all men construct their masculinities – whether that be through living up to the ideal or resisting it. The majority of men – and many women – respect and value this way of being a man, which is how it remains hegemonic. The value of the concept of hegemonic masculinity lies in the way in which it helps us theorise how masculinities can vary and change and yet why men overall have remained in positions of power and wealth. As Hooper puts it “Hegemonic masculinity gets transformed, through constant challenges and struggles, to resemble whatever traits happen to be most strategically useful for the getting and keeping of power” (Hooper 2000: 61).

In the British Army, despite the multiplicity and contradictions, the construction of the soldier as tough, brave, ready for action and also hard drinking, heterosexual and physically fit, can be said to have prevailed as the ideal or ‘hegemonic’ model (see chapter three). This does not mean that all soldiers fit this description; it means that this model commands power and respect and is recognisable as an ideal (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 592-600). It is because of the hegemony of the combat model, in part, that certain men have dominated within the military. The closer one fits or enacts the combat model, the more likely one is to gain power and respect. Those who are weak, cowardly, cannot hold their drink, do not chase women, are openly gay, are far from the front line, and so on, find it harder to command the respect of their fellow soldiers. For women, it is even harder to gain this respect: however strong, fit, hard-drinking and close to combat they are, their physical embodiment prevents them from fully enacting the model. This cultural domination does not translate exactly into a formal promotions structure, but is rather more subtle. Hegemonic masculinity is about cultural ideals, and the way people are subtly and sometimes unconsciously held to account if they do not live up to them. That is not to suggest that it does not have material results – the chances of promotion is one, as are the chances of being popular, being bullied, and being happy. But hegemonic masculinity is an analytical device rather than something which accurately describes the personalities of those who will rise to the top. The concept of hegemonic masculinity is also fluid enough to capture the way in

which the model can shift over time and in different contexts – sometimes it may be the physical brawn of the infantryman that is considered the ideal model of masculinity, at other times it may be the gentlemanly officer. Despite this fluidity, there is enough of a “family resemblance” in these models to make the concept of hegemonic masculinity meaningful (Brod and Kaufman 1994; Hooper 2000: 62).

It is the hegemony of the combat model which leads many feminists to find using the military as an instrument of peace problematic. Feminist scholars are as aware as anyone about the multiplicity of military masculinities; they rarely argue that all soldiers are inherently aggressive and prone to sexual exploitation. But they are also suspicious of the “few bad apples” defence of soldiers who are involved in bullying, aggression, torture and sexual exploitation in war and on PSOs. The concept of hegemonic masculinity enables theorists to combine an ontological commitment to multiple and fluid gender identities with an understanding of the link between men, especially soldiers, and violence as not merely the result of individual pathologies. It helps explain the way in which not all soldiers are aggressive and misogynist, but that the gender identities and hierarchies in the military are powerful structures which make certain behaviour more likely than if another group were intervening abroad. Connell and Messerschmidt thus summarise hegemonic masculinity as “the pattern of practice (i.e. things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue”(Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 832). It is hegemonic over other masculinities and always, by definition, over femininity. This dominance has material effects: particularly obvious in the case of this combat oriented hegemonic masculinity, which revolves around violence and aggression, both organised violence on the large scale, such as war, and violence against women on a more intimate scale – including the use of rape as a weapon of war, domestic violence, and the sexual exploitation of women on peacekeeping operations. The dominance is also reflected and reinforced in gender as a symbolic structure, which underpins the entire systems of war and militarism by privileging “tough” responses to conflict and feminising non-violent alternatives (Cohn and Ruddick 2002; Enloe 2007; Tickner 2001). This is why it is important to consider not just whether alternative military masculinities are being constructed in the context of PSOs, but whether they challenge the hegemonic model.

II: Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity

This raises the difficult question of how the power of hegemonic masculinity can ever be challenged. As hegemonic masculinity is not a personality type or a syndrome, but rather the way in which particular groups of men inhabit positions of power and wealth, can it ever be challenged? If it shifts and transforms in order to retain power, the implication is that it can never be overcome, and gender relations must always entail the privileging of masculinity over femininity. The particular practices and traits of the culturally ideal model might change, but there will always be a hegemonic model, the enactment of which is available only to elite groups of men. I argue that this is an unnecessarily pessimistic position and that it is possible to bring about more equitable gender relations, with the concept of regendered militaries providing an important example. In order to demonstrate what is distinctive about regendered militaries, I first discuss three cases which illustrate the difficulties in challenging hegemonic masculinity, then consider what Connell has had to say on the matter, before returning to apply the case of this thesis to the debate.

Hooper's Manly States

Charlotte Hooper analyses the role of *The Economist* magazine in the shaping, defining, and legitimating of international business masculinities. Her summary of the literature conveys the weight of evidence for the pessimistic case, that hegemonic masculinity is constantly being reinvented in order to retain power. Although crises of masculinity are a constant feature of the global order, they do not constitute a sign of the imminent demise of male power, but are part and parcel of the process of adjustment to the constant challenges posed to hegemonic masculinity (Hooper 2000: 67-8). When she turns to her study of *The Economist*, her findings are much the same. Hooper identifies a gradual softening of hegemonic masculinities in the West coinciding with globalization, with business and managerial strategies changing to emphasise the formerly feminine qualities of flexibility, interpersonal skills and team working – which are now being positioned masculine. In other words, activities and qualities that were previously defined as feminine are increasingly integrated into hegemonic masculinity, especially with the identification of men as consumers (Hooper 2000: 156). Hooper is keen to point out, however, that the emergence of the “New Man” is no simple strategy of replacement, but rather a situation of complex overlaps and reconfigurations (Hooper 2000: 192). Along with the softening of hegemonic masculinity towards these New Man constructions, for example, there is evidence of an aggressive re-masculinization process associated with globalization and technology (Hooper

2000: 158). Overall, however, hegemonic masculinity is being reconfigured in the image of a “less formal, less patriarchal, but more technocratic masculine elite that has the whole globe as its playground” (Hooper 2000: 193). This emerging hegemonic masculinity contains elements of both continuity and change: the aggressive deployment of “frontier masculinity” (today tied to contemporary globalization) provides a link to the past, but the need for softer, more informal qualities in business – qualities previously associated with “femininity” – provides the new.

Hooper therefore concludes her case study rather pessimistically. Hegemonic masculinity has adapted to include new skills and practices, but has retained what it needs of traditional hegemonic models in order to retain power. As a result, although there is plenty evidence of masculinities changing,

if, as in the past, Anglo-American hegemonic masculinity can successfully incorporate new elements while retaining its elitist international connotations and connections to the past, then any changes in the forms of relationships with women and subordinate groups of men are likely to remain peripheral or relatively insignificant in terms of removing substantive gender inequalities (Hooper 2000: 222-3).

Her study suggests that in the context of international business masculinities, despite some ‘softening,’ hegemonic masculinity is reconfigured in order to retain power. Men are able to enact a wider variety of practices, at work and beyond, including those that are conventionally associated as feminine, without losing their hold relative hold on wealth and power. As a result, despite the increased fluidity of gender and what counts as masculinity, women and subordinate groups of men are unlikely to benefit from this change in gender identities and relations.

Niva’s Tough but Tender Masculinities

Similarly, but directly in relation to military masculinities, Niva argues that it is possible to identify a shift in hegemonic masculinity in the public discourse surrounding the US invasion of Iraq in the First Gulf War. Niva identifies a new form of US military masculinity, in which an “openly articulated sense of manly vulnerability and human compassion” appeared to have replaced “bravado or stern invincibility” (Niva 1998: 118). In

response to the emasculation of the US military in the wake of Vietnam, Niva argues that the Gulf War enabled the US army and nation to reclaim their masculinity, but that this masculinity was significantly different:

However, the masculinity on display in the Gulf was not simply a carbon copy of the one-dimensional and hypermacho Rambo or his Delta Force colleagues. The new hegemonic masculinity had not only been shaped by the post-Vietnam realignment of gender relations in the US but had also been recast to fit the exigencies of the new world order proclaimed by President Bush. The new man was no longer the traditional nuclear family patriarch (Niva 1998: 118)

Niva points to the way in which, for example, General Colin Powell “openly wept at his high school reunion”, and General Norman Schwarzkopf “spoke of his love for the opera and his family and even donned traditional Saudi robes on occasion in a display of multicultural sensitivity” to demonstrate that American soldiers could be “tough but tender” (Niva 1998: 118). Military spokespersons’ constant references to worrying about the safety of “our troops” and media coverage which avoided jingoist militarism, are interpreted by Niva as evidence of a feminization of military masculinity, through the construction of a “tough and aggressive, yet tender-hearted masculinity” (Niva 1998: 118). The construction was based on race as well as gender, with the liberal and compassionate white masculinity of the US soldiers contrasted with Saddam Hussein, who became an “Oriental Hitler,” and a positioning of Arab men in general as backward in their macho and hypermasculine ways (Niva 1998: 119).

This new hegemonic vision of US masculinity also accentuated the “technological and civilizational superiority” of US society (Niva 1998: 119). Niva argues that the old John Wayne image of the warrior was replaced by blending the technologically sophisticated heroes of Tom Clancy’s technothriller novels with the mega masculine Rambo. Infantrymen took a backseat in war coverage to the likes of computer programmers, missile technologists, battle tank commanders and high-tech pilots. Niva argues that this enabled the reassertion of the primacy of the heroic male warrior in a way that was accessible to middle and upper class men whose heroes fight with their minds and with the most advanced technology society can develop: they too could consider themselves man enough to fight and defeat the enemy. The increase of US women soldiers in the first Gulf War is evidence that the “New

Man” seeks to include women in his world, although in limited (non-combatant) roles (Niva 1998: 120). Not only did the presence of women send out message of broadmindedness of US men, Niva argues, it also helped secure women’s support for the war and the further militarization of their lives. The increased visibility of US women soldiers also reassured the international community that the intervention had a civilized nature, framing “our liberated women” versus “their veiled women.” As Niva points out, it is less than ironic that this new tenderhearted and supremely civilized masculinity presided over one of the most lopsided slaughters in modern warfare (Niva 1998: 121).

As with the case of the New Man in the international business context discussed by Hooper, Niva identifies the way in which hegemonic masculinity can shift and mutate, without challenging the distribution of power and wealth. The new hegemonic masculinity appeared softer and more benign, whilst disguising the way in which power and wealth remained in the hands of elite western men:

This new masculinity can counter critics who claim it seeks to denigrate women or sharply define itself against the feminine. It can hold itself out as superior to and more easily justify its actions, however ill intentioned, against those men and masculinities in different social and cultural contexts that are still associated with traditional patriarchal social orders. And it can do all this without having to radically question the persistent fact that men, particularly elite western men, still dominate the major institutions, decision making bodies of international authority and power that, however enlightened their agendas and concerns, still shape the agenda of world politics (Niva 1998: 122).

As with Hooper’s reading of *The Economist*, a change in gender meanings is not necessarily progressive for women or subordinate men. For Niva, the shift in hegemonic masculinity is all about “realigning the general association of maleness with power” (Niva 1998: 122). Niva contends that rather than fundamental change, this was nothing more than “a redefinition of masculinity in man’s favour through an expansion of the concept of legitimate masculinity and thus an extension of masculinity’s power over women and deviant men who do not measure up to this new paradigm” (Niva 1998: 121). The result is a “hybrid masculinity,” combining aggressiveness *and* sensitivity, in order to ensure the position of elite men is harder to challenge.

Demetriou's Hybrid Masculinity

The idea of a hybrid masculinity is elaborated on in Demetriou's study of the challenge homosexual masculinities pose to hegemonic masculinity in western society. Demetriou argues that hegemonic masculinity is best articulated as a "hybrid" or "historic" or "hegemonic bloc" that unites various and diverse practices in order to construct the best possible strategy for the reproduction of patriarchy (Demetriou 2001: 348). He stresses the Gramscian origins of the concept, suggesting that, in this process of appropriation, "the fundamental class is in constant, mutual dialectical interaction with the allied groups and appropriates what appears pragmatically useful and constructive for the project of domination at that particular moment" (Demetriou 2001: 345). In other words, in order to retain power, useful elements are adopted into hegemonic masculinity, and useless elements are subordinated and eliminated. The outcome of this process is an amalgam, or equilibrium, that embodies the best possible strategy for external hegemony. This notion of hybridization is central to how hegemonic masculinity operates: "It is its constant hybridization, its constant appropriation of diverse elements from various masculinities that makes the hegemonic bloc capable of reconfiguring itself and adapting to the specificities of new historical conjunctures" (Demetriou 2001: 348).

In his argument that the form of masculinity that is capable of reproducing patriarchy is in a constant process of negotiation, translation, hybridization, and reconfiguration, Demetriou is the most pessimistic of the three authors. For, as he writes:

This implies more than a recognition that hegemonic masculinity is capable of transforming itself in order to adapt to the specificities of new historical conjunctures.... It is rather to stress that the hegemonic bloc changes in a very *deceptive* and unrecognizable way. It changes through negotiation, appropriation, and translation, through the transformation of what appears counter-hegemonic and progressive into an instrument of backwardness and patriarchal reproduction (Demetriou 2001: 356).

In order to illustrate these arguments, Demetriou contends that elements of gay masculinity have been adopted into hegemonic masculinity. The result of 1970s women's liberation campaigns was that patriarchy needed new legitimacy strategies. The answer to this "crisis of patriarchy" involved the formation of a new hegemonic masculinity that

incorporated the elements of gay masculinity which were useful for reproducing patriarchy (Demetriou 2001: 349). In other words, feminism forced men to resort to less overt ways of patriarchal domination (Demetriou 2001: 352). Instead of marginalizing gay masculinities, many heterosexual men welcomed most of them because they provided a masquerade behind which women's subordination could be masked; they could appropriate some elements – such as earrings for men and dressiness – in order to make the gender division of patriarchy less visible and thus win women's consent (Demetriou 2001: 352, 355). He concludes that “hegemonic masculinity, the masculinity that is culturally exalted and capable of reproducing patriarchy, is not constructed in total opposition to gay masculinities. Rather, many elements of the latter have become constitutive parts of a hybrid hegemonic bloc whose heterogeneity is able to render the patriarchal dividend invisible and legitimate patriarchal domination” (Demetriou 2001: 355). The appropriation of signifiers from gay subcultures makes the dominant form of masculinity appear “softer” and less opposed to contemporary femininities, but these softer masculinities, as the previous two cases have also suggested, are not necessarily emancipatory for women – or for all men. Hybridization makes the hegemonic bloc appear less oppressive and more egalitarian, it casts the “illusion that patriarchy has disappeared,” masking the fact that little has changed (Demetriou 2001: 352).

In all three of these cases from the literature, then, we have examples of hegemonic masculinity shifting and adapting in order to retain power. In these studies, it is suggested that this is how hegemonic masculinity operates *by definition*. This is especially in the work of Niva and Demetriou, who argue that hegemonic masculinity operates as a hybrid, expanding to include whatever traits are necessary in order to retain power. The logical conclusion of this perspective however, is that the gender order can never be challenged. Masculinities might seem, or even become, more benign, softer, less aggressive, but there is no real shift in power, wealth or respect away from elite men, there is no fundamental challenging of inequality in society. In these three examples, although traditional models of hegemonic masculinity are challenged and transformed, the transformation takes the form of an expansion rather than a replacement. With these examples in mind, it is worth returning to the work of the originator of the concept, in order to explore whether this pessimism is justified. Can there be a more fundamental, more radical, challenge to hegemonic masculinity? A change where we see real and lasting change in gender relations, where

equality replaces hierarchy? A truly progressive change which is positive for women and subordinate groups of men?

Connell and “Positive Hegemonic Masculinity”

Connell’s work itself is ambiguous on this question. From initial theorising about hegemonic masculinity to her more recent work, she is always open to the idea that hegemonic masculinity is capable of radical reform – of being unravelled rather than merely transformed. At the same time, the way hegemonic masculinity is defined implies that it operates, as in the examples above, by transforming in order to retain power. From its very conception in a 1985 article co-authored with Carrigan and Lee, hegemonic masculinity is said to be capable of more fundamental change. In this article, for example, the authors state that defining hegemonic masculinity as an “effective political practice” implies that it is something “that can be worked on and transformed,” and, indeed, “The question of transformation, its possibilities, sources and strategies, should be central to the analysis of masculinity” (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 596). They point in particular to emotional relations such as sexual desire as being a possible “mighty engine of change” (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 597). When they move on to give a more concrete example, however, the change seems to be that of adaptation and reconfiguration, rather than a more fundamental and progressive challenge. Tracing changes in masculinities on a large scale through the 70s and 80s they argue that:

The dominion of men over women, and the supremacy of particular groups of men over others, is sought by constantly re-constituting gender relations as a system within which that dominance is generated. Hegemonic masculinity might be seen as what would function automatically if the strategy were entirely successful. But it never does function automatically. The project is contradictory, the conditions for its realization are constantly changing, and, most importantly, there is resistance from the groups being subordinated. The violence in gender relations is not part of the essence of masculinity... so much as a measure of the bitterness of this struggle (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 598).

In this struggle for domination, hegemonic masculinity constantly has to adapt to the resistance of subordinated groups. As such, they write, men’s movements of the 1970s aimed to produce forms of masculinity able to adapt to the new conditions brought about by feminism. They further argue, however, that the goal was also to ensure these forms were

not so new so as to question radically the family, heterosexuality, capitalist work relations, and American national power, all of which were taken for granted by these men's movements. Again, this can be seen as the classic case of hegemonic masculinity – shifting to encompass those practices which allow men (albeit some more than others) to remain dominant. Yet, they go on, the triumph of this strategy was not inevitable; other responses to feminism were possible, including attempts to work out in practice un-oppressive forms of heterosexuality (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 600). The 1985 article thus remains theoretically open to a more radical and fundamental challenge to hegemonic masculinity, whilst giving us another example of hegemonic masculinity's ability to adapt.

In Connell's most recent article addressing hegemonic masculinity, co-authored with Messerschmidt, again it is stated that hegemonic masculinity can be positive (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Fleshing this out, they write that gender relations are always areas of tension, of contestation, and that, crucially, "hegemony may fail":

Put another way, the conceptualization of hegemonic masculinity should explicitly acknowledge the possibility of democratizing gender relations, of abolishing power differentials, not just of reproducing hierarchy. A transitional move in this direction requires an attempt to establish as hegemonic among men a version of hegemony open to equality of women. In this sense, it is possible to define a hegemonic masculinity that is thoroughly positive. Recent history has shown the difficulty of doing this in practice. A positive hegemony remains, nevertheless, a key strategy for contemporary efforts at reform (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 853).

The suggestion is that it is possible to have a positive hegemonic masculinity – positive in the sense that it is open to equality with women and hegemonic in the sense that it remains dominant among models of masculinity. This argument is problematic: it is hard to square Connell and Messerschmidt's formula for change with their understanding of hegemonic masculinity outlined earlier in the same article, where hegemonic masculinity is the:

pattern of practice (i.e. things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue... It embodied the currently most honoured way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the

This definition (along with the many others from Connell's writings on the concept) links hegemonic masculinity to domination over women and casts doubt on the suggestion that hegemonic masculinity "can be thoroughly positive." It may be that Connell and Messerschmidt intend this definition to be a "holding definition" – offered at the start of the article but superseded by the formula for more fundamental change developed at the end. Or the problem may merely be terminological: it is problematic to talk of a "positive hegemonic masculinity" when hegemony has been defined and is commonly understood as a practice of power, even if it is power achieved through consent.

I think the issue is more than terminological, however, and concerns the proposed two step process: firstly establishing a version of masculinity which is open to equality with women as hegemonic amongst men, then, secondly, eradicating relations of hierarchy with femininity and women, presumably through allowing the hegemonic masculinity to construct those relations of equality. This appears to me to be somewhat problematic if we recall the means by which hegemonic masculinity achieves its hegemonic status: through the feminization of other groups of men. One of the strengths of hegemonic masculinity as a concept derives from the way in which it captures the relationship between the dynamics which exist between men and women and those existing within groups of men (Demetriou 2001). It explains why feminization is such an effective strategy in terms of positioning and policing subordinate groups of men. But it also requires that there cannot be a hegemonic masculinity amongst men which is simultaneously open to relations of equality with women – to become hegemonic, it will necessarily have feminized others, and this feminization process unavoidably disparages women.

I argue that, although the terminology of "positive hegemony" is unhelpful, Connell and Messerschmidt are right that "hegemony may fail." Nothing in the concept of hegemonic masculinity excludes the possibility of dismantling it and replacing it with more democratic gender relations. This is not the same as abolishing gender, which may not be either feasible or desirable, but it is arguably possible to replace the power and oppression which has historically characterised gender relations with mutual respect and equality. The transitory stage suggested is also problematic, however, as it attempts to include an openness to

equality with women within hegemonic masculinity, which is by definition formed through creating hierarchical non-democratic relations over femininity and women.

Dismantling Hegemonic Masculinity

A better strategy is found in Connell's reflections on masculinities, violence, and the promotion of peace. Here she argues that the aim is to "reshape" masculinity, through "disconnecting" some of the linkages that form hegemonic definitions, writing that the goal:

should be to develop gender practices for men which shift gender relations in a democratic direction. Democratic gender relations are those that move towards equality, non-violence, and mutual respect between people of different genders, sexualities, ethnicities and generations. Some of the qualities in 'traditional' definitions of masculinity (e.g. courage, steadfastness, ambition) are certainly needed in the cause of peace...The task is not to abolish gender but to reshape it; to disconnect (for instance) courage from violence, steadfastness from prejudice, ambition from exploitation (Connell 2000a: 29-30)

Again, there are two strategies, but here, the problematic terminology of "positive hegemony" and the idea that masculinities could be hegemonic among men but democratic in their relations with women are absent. As well as losing the problematic transitory stage, there is also a more concrete discussion about how masculinity can be "reshaped:" the development of democratic gender relations of equality, non-violence and mutual respect remains crucial, but what is spelt out is the importance of the "disconnect" or de-linking of some traditionally masculine practices from others. This represents a less problematic way of expressing how hegemonic masculinity could be dismantled.

Despite concluding her case study pessimistically, Hooper's theoretical perspective and closing thoughts on feminist challenges and praxis offer some further clues as to how this more fundamental challenge – involving the "unravelling" rather than the mere reconfiguration – to hegemonic masculinity might be brought about (Hooper 2000: 226-231). She argues that those practices which ensure that hegemonic masculinity evolves to meet the requirement of retaining power and privilege for elite men under changing circumstances have their limits. As she puts it: "since they depend on an arbitrary list of qualities being anchored by a metaphorical association with male anatomy, they are

obviously less effective when masculinities become denaturalized” (Hooper 2000: 75). In other words, the artificiality and fluidity of gender can be exposed and this is particularly so in situations where traditional definitions of masculinity are under challenge – such as when soldiers are involved in peacekeeping. In such situations:

There is room for feminists to exploit the contradictions between “softer” and “harder” forms of masculinity that are on offer... and to nurture those alternative relationships, identities, and narratives that will renegotiate the relationship between diverse groups of women, femininity and globalization (Hooper 2000: 194).

This is in part simple deconstruction, discussed in the previous chapter: exposing contradictions, highlighting the artificiality of gender dichotomies, underlining the multiple indeterminacies of an apparently stable gender order and so on. As Hooper argues, however, “Keeping such contradictions visible could help in very practical struggles” (Hooper 2000: 229). Highlighting the contradictions, for Hooper, is more than an academic exercise, but leads to two political strategies.

The first stems from her point that some forms of hegemonic masculinity are more “uncompromisingly masculinist” than others. The New Man in the business context, incorporates many practices traditionally considered feminine, resulting in more women being able to “fit the bill” (Hooper 2000: 230). It is this contention that progressive change can result from the fluidity of gender that differentiates Connell and Hooper from Niva, Demetriou. “Softer” hegemonic masculinities matter – they are not *just* smokescreens, appearances masking the “reality” that nothing has changed. Admittedly, they *can and mostly do* act to enable men to retain power but they *can also* make a difference in terms of the likelihood of change in gender relations. They can be used both to demonstrate the inconsistencies and hypocrisies in the recoding of ‘feminine’ practices as ‘masculine’; and to enable women to occupy more positions of power.

The second political strategy is addressed in Hooper’s final point: that the appearance of women in all male spaces is crucial:

Masculinity appears to have no stable ingredients and therefore its power depends entirely on certain qualities constantly being associated with men. Masculine spaces are precisely the spaces where such associations are cemented and naturalized. Therefore, even the marginal appearance of women (particularly if they refuse to play the part of honorary men), together with feminist ideas, and/or other self-conscious reference to gender issues, may sufficiently alter the overall ambience of such spaces that their masculine associations become weakened (Hooper 2000: 231)

The oft-discredited feminist strategy of inclusion thus appears again in this context – as with the importance of women soldiers in regendered militaries – as something which has potential to lead to more transformatory change. This point will be further drawn out in the next section, when the case of peacekeeper masculinity and regendered soldiers and militaries is discussed in relation to the lessons of these cases from the literature.

III: Peacekeeper Masculinity's Challenge

This section goes on to consider how the case of this thesis – the construction of peacekeeper masculinity in British Army discourse on PSOs – fits into and illuminates these debates about hegemonic masculinity. The first part addresses the question of to what extent peacekeeper masculinity could be said to challenge the hegemony of the combat model of masculinity in the British Army. The second part discusses whether peacekeeper masculinity's challenge to the hegemonic masculinity is just another case of hegemonic masculinity acting as “business as usual” – shifting and adapting in order to retain power – or whether it is the more fundamental challenge necessary for progressive change. It argues that although peacekeeper masculinity can be read in both ways, the feminist vision of regendered soldiers and regendered militaries inspired by the progressive signs in peacekeeper masculinity, represents the more fundamental challenge, the unravelling of hegemonic masculinity.

Peacekeeper Masculinity as Hegemonic Masculinity

The analysis of British Army discourse on PSOs, albeit a necessarily limited and exploratory investigation, revealed that peacekeeper masculinity does not dominate: there is much evidence that the power of the combat model remains compelling for many soldiers. At the same time, the emergent discourse of peacekeeper masculinity can be read as the attempt not

just to construct an alternative military masculinity but as simultaneously the attempt to position this alternative gender identity as hegemonic. This is not unusual, but rather, the way in which the gender hierarchy always functions. Rather than masculinities being constructed and then jostling for position, the positioning takes place at the same time as the construction or negotiation, or as Carrigan, Connell and Lee put it “Hegemony is not achieved through a contest for superiority between ready formed masculinities or groups of men, but is intimately connected to the construction of such groupings” (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee 1985: 594).

The discourse of peacekeeper masculinity positions peacekeeping as masculine *and* attempts to position it as hegemonic through the various strategies of masculinization outlined in chapter four. Peacekeeping is linked to various terms and practices which are conventionally understood as being masculine, such as toughness, bravery, rationality, control, and the difficulties and challenges of PSOs were emphasised, in order to suggest that only a person of great skill and authority could succeed on such an operation. This serves to position peacekeeper masculinity as hegemonic because implicit in this strategy is that only those enacting peacekeeper masculinity (and therefore male soldiers) are up to the task. Reinforcing this is the positioning of Others, including in particular the positioning of combat and war, and those that engage in them, as feminine, and the feminizing of civilians in the area in conflict, who were at times portrayed as backward, in need of help and ruled by irrational ‘ancient hatreds.’ Even the ambiguity in the positioning of other men in the PSO operational environment, such as journalists, politicians, and aid workers – with evidence of their conflict resolution skills being praised, but also evidence of resistance to being associated too closely with these non-military men – contributes to the attempt to position peacekeeper masculinity as hegemonic. Either way such instances are interpreted, peacekeeper masculinity emerges as superior both to combat masculinity – newly discredited as hypermasculine – and to softer non-military masculinities which cannot claim the status of action heroes associated with peacekeeper masculinity.

The portrayal of local commanders as hypermasculine might be thought to offer a challenge to the argument that peacekeeper masculinity is constructed as hegemonic through *feminising* Others. If other men are seemingly portrayed as more masculine, how can this serve to position peacekeeper masculinity as anything other than more feminine and therefore inferior? As we have seen, however, it is not such an unusual strategy. The rise of

the “New Man” is evident in the examples from the literature discussed above. Hooper argues that there is collapse of traditional patriarchal forms of masculinity in the pages of *The Economist* (Hooper 2000: 192); and Niva pointed to the way that Saddam Hussein was consistently portrayed as the anachronistic hypermacho opponent who in the end could not match the liberal and compassionate US man (Niva 1998: 119). Indeed, it is a phenomenon echoed in a variety of contexts, including the US, where blue collar males have become “the dumping ground for all the vestigial masculine traits discarded by the lower class,” (Ehrenreich 1983: 136) and Mexico where:

those aspects of traditional hegemonic masculinity that the New Man has rejected – over physical and verbal displays of domination, stoicism, and emotional inexpressivity, overt misogyny in the workplace and at home – are now increasingly projected onto less privileged groups of men: working class men, gay bodybuilders, black athletes, Latinos and immigrant men (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner 1994: 207).

The strategy of portraying Other men as hypermasculine certainly does not seem unique (also see Zalewski and Enloe 1995: 291-293). The prevalence of these New Men in a variety of contexts leads Hooper to argue that “the projection of currently unwanted characteristics onto subordinate groups, branded as pathological or aberrant varieties of masculinity, appears to be ascendant over the earlier projection of effeminacy, as hegemonic masculinities increasingly soften” (Hooper 2000: 74).

I am not so sure that strategies of feminization are becoming less effective or common; rather, at least in the military, there is a complex mix of Othering strategies which include *both* feminization and constructing a malignant hypermasculinity. Indeed, in British Army PSO discourse, it is interesting to note the way in which these two strategies come close to overlapping. Here, as seen in chapter seven, hypermasculinity is not a stable construction, but rather one which is always at risk of collapsing into femininity. The soldiers’ descriptions of the big, aggressive, local commanders contain as many references to physical weaknesses, irrationality and an excess of emotion – traditionally associated with femininity. The strategies of feminisation and hyper-masculinisation thus appear to be connected, acting together in order to assert the hegemony of new hegemonic masculinities.

To sum up this section, I am not suggesting that peacekeeper masculinity has been successful in challenging the hegemony of the combat model; it is an emergent masculinity, rather than the principal or prevailing one. However, in its very construction is the effort to position it as hegemonic, and there is the possibility that it could become hegemonic or more powerful a model than it appears to be today. Moreover, even as a subordinate model, I argue that it has interesting lessons for theorising how change can be achieved. As the previous section argued, there are different forms of challenge. Is the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity merely an addition to our list of examples of where hegemonic masculinity shifts and mutates and disguises the fact that little has changed? In Demetriou's terms, is there evidence of a new hybrid, where the hegemonic masculinity associated with combat has appropriated from other masculinities whatever appears to be pragmatically useful for continued domination? Is the new hegemonic masculinity in the British Army akin to Niva's tough but tender military masculinity in the US Army? Or, can we identify any sign of a more fundamental challenge to the hegemonic masculinity of the combat model?

“Business as Usual” or Radical Challenge?

That the type of challenge posed by peacekeeper masculinity is yet another example of hegemonic masculinity operating as “business as usual” is backed up by at least two points. Firstly, one of the interesting findings of the discourse analysis is that it is not the case that some soldiers have adopted peacekeeper masculinity and others not; rather, there was evidence of significant tension throughout the discourse – in both official sources and within individual soldiers' reflections. This implies that soldiers in the British Army want to enact both combat masculinity and peacekeeper masculinity. They valorise PSOs, but they do not want to let go of the combat masculinity – unsurprising, when we consider the power this model has had in the constitution of soldier identities for so long. One could suggest, therefore, that a hybrid masculinity would be the most likely result of a more dominant discourse of peacekeeper masculinity. This hybrid masculinity would combine the practices of conflict resolution with the practices of combat – just as Niva's tough and tender masculinity was said to operate in the US.

Secondly, another key finding was the way in which peacekeeper masculinity was constructed in relation to various Others. In cases where these Others were subordinated – such as when local commanders were hyper-masculinised, aid workers were disparaged as ineffective naïve do-gooders, civilians were feminised as helpless victims or constructed as

child-like and primitive, squabbling over ancient hatreds, or when women were not taken seriously as actors in their local communities – such constructions serve to create new hierarchical gendered dichotomies. Whenever there are hierarchies, those groups who fail to match up stand to lose out in both symbolic and material ways. As we have seen, those who are feminized and racialised are disempowered, not taken seriously and have relatively limited access to power and wealth. Arguably, when peacekeeper masculinity is constructed this way, through radical Others, it merely constructs new gendered dichotomies and becomes the new, but equally problematic, hegemonic masculinity.⁹⁶

A case can also be made, however, for the argument that peacekeeper masculinity represents a more fundamental challenge to hegemonic masculinity. The significance of peacekeeper masculinity is in the way it, firstly, challenges traditional gendered dichotomies. This challenge can be seen in the de-linking of masculinity from the practices of combat and the new linkages to the practices of conflict resolution, fulfilling Connell's priority for reshaping gender, which, if we recall, was outlined as follows:

Some of the qualities in 'traditional' definitions of masculinity (e.g. courage, steadfastness, ambition) are certainly needed in the cause of peace...The task is not to abolish gender but to reshape it; to disconnect (for instance) courage from violence, steadfastness from prejudice, ambition from exploitation (Connell 2000a 29-30) .

Secondly, there was evidence in the discourse of peacekeeper masculinity being constructed in relations that did not involve radical Othering, that is, Othering that involved feminizing, racialising, hypermasculinising or otherwise disparaging the Other. Peacekeeper masculinity could be constructed through relations of empathy and mutual respect. In these examples, we can see evidence of Connell's other strategy for dismantling hegemonic masculinity:

⁹⁶ A third point backing the "business as usual" case, I am reluctant to make because the data concerning women soldiers was so sparse, but, as it would be worth further investigation, I note it here. It is the lack of evidence in peacekeeper masculinity discourse to suggest that women soldiers are finding themselves newly valued and respected. Despite the construction in peacekeeper masculinity discourse of a soldierly ideal that has broadened to include practices which have previously been associated with femininity, because they are linked to masculinity, there is little evidence of a new valuing of women or the 'feminine.'

Our goal [...] should be to develop gender practices for men which shift gender relations in a democratic direction. Democratic gender relations are those that move towards equality, non-violence, and mutual respect between people of different genders, sexualities, ethnicities and generations (Connell 2000a: 29).

When peacekeeper masculinity is constructed through relations of empathy and mutual respect, we get this democratisation of gender relations rather than new hierarchies being created. This is crucial if hegemonic masculinity is to be radically transformed.

The example of peacekeeper masculinity alerts us to the way in which change might be achievable through a different path to that suggested by Connell and Messerschmidt's 2005 formulation. The idea of a masculinity hegemonic among men retaining its hegemony but being open to relations of equality with women is contradictory. The idea that a "softer", more feminised form of masculinity, such as peacekeeper masculinity, can become hegemonic, and then, when constructed through relations of equality, start to transform gender relations, however, seems to me to be a theoretical possibility. Rather than attempting to tackle the more difficult challenge first, which is to achieve relations of equality, the relational aspect of gender should be thought of as the second stage. The first stage is the more common, and more achievable one of the hegemonic masculinity incorporating traits which have been traditionally disparaged as feminine. The question becomes whether change of this sort makes the vital stage of shifting relations of hierarchy to relations of equality more or less likely.

Regendered Militaries: Hegemonic Masculinity Dismantled

In the previous chapter, it was argued that if peacekeeper masculinity continued to challenge traditional gendered dichotomies in ways which could be exploited by feminists, and, crucially, if it was constructed through non-radical Others, it would come to represent the regendered military envisioned by Cockburn and Hubic. A regendered military is one where, by definition, there are fluid and shifting gender roles, open equally to men and women; where conflict resolution practices are valorised by everyone, but not because of any linkage to masculinity; and where relations of mutual respect, equality and democracy are the norm. Cockburn and Hubic's notion of a "regendered soldier," represents a challenge to hegemonic masculinity of a different nature to that in the examples from the literature considered in this chapter. It is a more fundamental challenge, where not only the meanings

of masculinity and femininity are questioned, but so is the valuing of masculinity over femininity and therefore the domination which has characterised gender relations. As such, the whole system of hierarchical relations is challenged, not just particular gendered dichotomies associated with the discourses of war and militarization. Regendered soldiers and militaries thus represent the unravelling of hegemonic masculinity in a military context.

How do you achieve change such as that represented by regendered militaries? The previous chapter suggested a strategy of deconstruction plus reconstruction, involving modified versions of the oft-discredited feminist strategies of inclusion and reversal. This needs to be translated into the language of hegemonic masculinity. The discussion above of how Connell and Hooper both articulate change gives us our starting point. Connell discusses “de-linking” masculinity from negative aspects and encouraging relations of equality, but does not elaborate by specifying actual strategies for change. Hooper suggests two strategies: exposing the contradictions inherent in softer masculinities, and feminists infiltrating masculinised spaces, but almost as epilogues to her largely pessimistic account. This thesis has developed these strategies, using the concept of regendered militaries, arguing that both are necessary and suggesting a third.

The first strategy is one of deconstruction. It involves using the contradictions of softer masculinities such as peacekeeper masculinity to expose the artificiality of traditional gender dichotomies. Pointing out that masculinity’s association with war, combat, violence, toughness and so on is not natural but artificiality constructed – and demonstrating that to men themselves through the concrete example of peacekeepers, as opposed to relying on theoretical argument – can go some way to challenging militarism and war. As the symbolic structure of gender, the dichotomies war/peace, protector/protected, active/passive, tough/weak, hero/victim, and so on, are challenged, it becomes harder to convince boys they need to demonstrate courage under fire in order to be men, or to convince electorates that governments must stand firm and be tough in dealings with other nations.

The second strategy, the infiltration of women into all-male spaces, can be conceptualised as a modified version of both inclusion and reversal. Rather than being based on arguments about women’s equality or the need to value women or ‘femininity’, this strategy of increasing women’s bodies in masculine spaces involves simultaneously rejecting fixed

notions of masculine and feminine. Just as women soldiers are necessary in the vision of regendered militaries, in order to achieve the shift to fluid and shifting gender roles, neither masculinised nor feminised, women will need to infiltrate many male-dominated spaces, but on the basis that they will disrupt and challenge the institution itself.

The third strategy is the need to encourage the formation of relations of equality, not hierarchy. Otherwise, as this thesis has contended, whatever the progress made in terms of softer masculinities, the result is new radical Others, new hierarchical dichotomies. It is the relational aspect of masculinity construction which is crucial. Yet, it is this that is hardest to change – as the history of gender relations demonstrates. One sign of optimism is that “softer” masculinities may be more open to constructing relations of equality, democracy, and mutual respect. For example, Hooper argues that the bureaucratic model of hegemonic masculinity emerging in the international business context is *formally* open to relations of equality (Hooper 2000: 230). As a result, it is harder for men enacting such a masculinity to resist claims for equality, thereby encouraging the move beyond formal commitments to the building of actual relations of equality. In the case of peacekeeper masculinity, as soldiers enacting peacekeeper masculinity valorise conflict resolution, at some point they are likely to recognise that this involves respecting all Others. So the third strategy becomes one of pushing the contradictions of the New Man in its various contexts to resolve them by enacting the relations of equality, empathy and mutual respect implied, or formally committed to, in its “softer” guises.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to situate the case of peacekeeper masculinity in the wider literature which addresses hegemonic masculinity and gender relations. It discussed three cases from the literature, and showed how in each the author argued that hegemonic masculinity shifted and mutated in order to retain power in new circumstances, rather than being more fundamentally challenged with progressive consequences for women or subordinate men. The work of Connell was discussed in order to explore whether hegemonic masculinity operates this way by definition, or whether there is room in the concept for a more fundamental challenge. It was suggested that, despite problems with Connell’s 2005 formulation, nothing in the concept of hegemonic masculinity prevented positive change in gender relations. Positive change could come about through exploiting the contradictions in

hegemonic masculinities, contradictions that increase in reaction to challenges from women and subordinate men. Positive change also involved the democratisation of gender relations, and so could come about through the construction of masculinities through relations of mutual respect and empathy.

The case of peacekeeper masculinity was applied to this theoretical debate. Although there was evidence that peacekeeper masculinity's challenge to hegemonic masculinity was yet another example of hegemonic masculinity operating as "business as usual" – shifting in order to incorporate new practices that would help it retain power – a case could also be made for peacekeeper masculinity embodying a more fundamental challenge. As peacekeeper masculinity incorporates many practices conventionally associated with femininity, but links them to masculinity, it becomes a model which is full of contradictions – and therefore one which is ripe for feminists to exploit. It is only when peacekeeper masculinity is constructed through non-radical Others, however, that it can be said to form the more fundamental challenge to hegemonic masculinity required for real and lasting change in gender relations. It is when it is formed through relations of mutual respect and empathy that it democratises gender relations, and starts to dismantle the entire system of hierarchical gender relations. In the concepts of the regendered soldier and the regendered military, where all relations are constructed in this way, we have an important example – heretofore elusive – of the more fundamental challenge to hegemonic masculinity – its unravelling rather than its reconfiguration.

Chapter Ten: Conclusion – Regendered Militaries and (Gender) Justice, Peace and Security

I: The anti-militarist Feminist Challenge

The question of how to achieve real and long lasting change in gender relations, where hegemonic masculinity is “dismantled” or “unravelling”, rather than merely transformed, is one of the most crucial questions in gender studies. It highlights the central dilemma facing feminism today: how can we reconcile an understanding of the fluidity of gender with progressive politics? Masculinities and femininities are increasingly understood as active processes – ways of living lives in relation to both physical embodiment and social structures. The specific features or traits associated with masculinity or femininity can change, but benefits – power, respect, wealth, and so on – always accrue to those who most closely enact the hegemonic model. This hegemonic model, which dominates a variety of subordinate, marginalised or complicit masculinities as well as femininity, can also change; it is a fluid cultural ideal, transforming in order to maintain its position of power. If we understand hegemonic masculinity to operate in this way, the logical implication appears to be that we must give up on the potential of eradicating power from gender relations and creating relations of equality, democracy and mutual respect.

Gender is not just a question of individual identities. It operates as a symbolic system, underpinning western culture and language, and thus influencing how we think about all aspects of our social world, including, as chapter two demonstrated, IR and issues of security, war and peace. This means that when we talk about the major questions and dilemmas facing gender studies, we are not just talking about how to tackle the power and wealth of elite groups of men, or of men relative to women – we are talking about how to tackle much broader issues: war, militarism, insecurity, inequality, injustice. The question of whether we can achieve change in gender relations, and unravel hegemonic masculinity in fundamental ways, is thus a question about achieving not just gender justice or gender equality, but peace, security, justice and equality in their broadest sense.

In the specific context of the British Army, as chapter three explored, there is much evidence of the fluidity of gender. Masculinities were found to be multiple, dynamic and contradictory. At the same time, there was also evidence of the enduring power of a hegemonic model, associated with the practices of toughness, fitness, invulnerability, bravery, rationality, and the suppression of emotions such as fear or pain – the practices that have been deemed necessary for the Army to fulfil its combat role. Although some specific aspects vary according to the context – both the tough, aggressive squaddie and the Eton-educated officer can represent the cultural ideal of military manliness – these practices serve to link and delineate the model. The hegemonic model influences how all soldiers construct their masculinity; soldiers have needed to prove they are physically fit, emotionally hard, and mentally robust in order to prove their worth, which is explicitly linked to manliness. Equally importantly, however, because of the way in which constructions of masculinity in the military have wider currency, influencing how masculinity is defined in society, the hegemony of the combat model has prevented significant challenges to the militarism of the UK state. Whilst there are pacifists, critics of particular campaigns and critics of the level of military spending, for example, there has been little sign of widespread mainstream opposition to the ideas that it is important to be strong, tough, resolute and willing to use force in Foreign Policy. There has been little sign, in other words, of explicit challenges to the gendered dichotomies which structure our language and thought and which serve to underpin and justify militarism and war. The shifting (in its specifics) yet enduring (in its association with power) hegemonic masculinity found in the British Army raised questions about the possibility of achieving the anti-militarist feminist vision of security, justice and equality.

This thesis set out to explore British military masculinities in the context of Peace Support Operations in order to ask whether this context provided a more positive story – military masculinities which were linked to the practices of conflict resolution rather than combat. If such masculinities existed, could they challenge the hegemonic masculinity associated with combat? And, moreover, could this be the hitherto elusive challenge required for justice, equality and peace – the dismantling or unravelling of hegemonic masculinity, rather than its mere adaptation? The following section summarises the conclusions of the research, and highlights areas for future study.

II: Constructions of Masculinity in the British Army on PSOs

The analysis of both official and unofficial sources of British Army discourse on PSOs revealed that there were two competing discourses: one constructing PSOs as masculine, and another constructing them as emasculating. Chapter six focused on the practices that peacekeepers are involved in on PSOs, conflict resolution practices such as communication, negotiation, mediation, consent-building, restraint over the use of force and humanitarian activities. In the first discourse, these practices were linked to masculinity through a variety of strategies, building a model of peacekeeper masculinity. In the second, these same practices were constructed as emasculating, reinforcing the model of military masculinity associated with the practices of combat, the model which has traditionally been hegemonic within the British Army. The chapter demonstrated that whilst combat masculinity remains the dominant discursive construction within British Army discourse, the practices of peacekeeping are linked to masculinity often enough for peacekeeper masculinity to emerge as an identifiable alternative model.

To a certain extent, these discourses were confirmed when the interactions of soldiers with others were considered in chapter seven. At the same time, the picture was complicated by a set of more ambiguous and contradictory constructions. Feminist scholarship has traditionally focused on the way that masculinities are always constructed in relation to femininities – real or imagined. Focusing on women has therefore always been particularly revealing when it comes to understanding masculinities. Here, however, it was found that there were no straightforward conclusions to be drawn from the ways in which women were positioned and femininity constructed in British Army discourse. This was perhaps partly to do with the relative absence of women from British Army discourse around PSOs, which meant that there were not many examples to explore. The examples which did exist were ambiguous and contradictory. There were examples which reinforced the traditional protected/protector gendered dichotomy found in discourses of war more generally where women are positioned as passive victims, primitive and backward, or sexualised. In such constructions, women are not taken seriously as actors in the public arena, whether that be in their local communities or beyond. There were also examples which disrupted this discourse, however, with women being respected and taken seriously as actors in their communities or as soldier colleagues. Further research into the relations between British soldiers and women (civilians and soldiers), and how such relations are constructed, interpreted and understood by both parties, is essential to uncover the extent to which

traditional gendered dichotomies, and therefore traditional models of masculinity, are being challenged.

There were more obvious conclusions to be drawn from the way that peacekeeper masculinity was constructed in relation to other groups of men, but even here, there was room for some ambiguity and contradiction. Peacekeeper masculinity was found to be constructed primarily in relation to the hypermasculinity of local fighting men who were positioned as excessively violent, aggressive and irrational, serving to position peacekeeper masculinity as restrained, humane, intelligent, civilized and advanced. Male civilians were often positioned in similar ways – backward, primitive and violent – reinforcing this construction of peacekeeper masculinity. Aid workers, politicians and journalists tended to be portrayed as naïve, ineffectual do-gooders, which positioned peacekeeper masculinity as capable of achieving results – it also positioned peacekeeper masculinity somewhere between the “softer” masculinities of non-military men and the newly discredited attributes associated with hypermasculinity. Again, however, disruptions were sometimes evident: male civilians were sometimes positioned as equals, struggling against overwhelming odds to make a difference, deserving of respect and empathy; and aid workers, journalists and politicians were sometimes described as if they too were deserving of respect, as making crucial contributions to peace and security.

The analysis in this thesis has been of necessity an exploratory one: the British Army is simply too big an organisation for one person to conduct an investigation offering a definitive answer to the current state of British Army masculinities in any objective sense. Indeed, it is questionable whether it is possible to measure the level of existence of a model of masculinity in an institution, given the understanding of models as theoretical constructs, rather than the personalities of individual men. The intention here has been to identify interesting developments in the discursive construction of gender identities and relations, and to explore the implications of military masculinities linked to the practices of conflict resolution rather than combat. Nonetheless, as the implications of peacekeeper masculinity are potentially so far-reaching, further empirical research into the question of the strength and status of peacekeeper masculinity within the British Army would be worthwhile. Although it may not be possible to measure the level in a positivist sense, further exploration would enable us to make stronger claims as to the significance of peacekeeper masculinity as a model with the British Army than has been possible here.

This thesis does uncover some of the factors which appear to make the construction and enactment of peacekeeper masculinity more likely and, as such, suggests the starting points for such future research. Soldiers who are older and more senior in rank and experience, for example, tend to be more inclined to construct and enact peacekeeper masculinity than those who are more junior. So, for example Rose, who is a General and Commander of the British UN Forces in Bosnia, repeatedly constructs peacekeeping as masculine; Woolley, however, who is on his first operation when peacekeeping in the Balkans, more often finds peacekeeping frustrating and emasculating. This suggests the possibility that when a soldier has risen up the ranks and proved his toughness, he is increasingly free to enact new masculinities which emphasise practices other than strength and toughness. More junior soldiers have still much to prove, and it is easier to establish masculinity through traditionally accepted practices than to attempt to construct new alternative masculinities. Such a theory is lent strength by the way in which Curtis, as an SAS soldier, held to be the most macho of military branches, with combat experience in the Falklands and Iraq, is also to be found presenting peacekeeping as masculine: challenging, difficult, and satisfying. It is as if the masculinity of some is not in question, given their elite position and military record, allowing them to enact feminized traits without fear of actually being feminized. Segal suggests a similar theory in a more general comment about masculinity: “The constant pressure to confirm masculinity in its difference from femininity may also explain why it is only when men are seen at their most unquestionably masculine – as soldiers in combat, as footballers in action – that they can embrace, weep, display what Western manhood depicts as more feminine feelings and behaviour” (Segal 1997: 103). This is obviously problematic: if it is only once toughness, hardness and aggression have been proved that peacekeeper masculinity can be enacted, the hegemony of the combat masculinity will never be challenged. As such, it is important to investigate the extent to which this dynamic is the case in the British Army and beyond.

The difference between officers and soldiers is also an obvious one for further research: as the practices associated with conflict resolution overlap to a degree with the skills and values which have always been promoted as essential to being an officer – rationality, intelligence, leadership, flexibility, communication, for example – officers are perhaps more likely to perform peacekeeper masculinity. The data from or about rank and file soldiers within this thesis, however, albeit limited, suggests that it is not quite so straightforward. The type of

operation affects all soldiers in some way, either in motivations, day-to-day tasks, or rewards, and there is evidence that some soldiers also link masculinity and soldiering to practices associated with conflict resolution.

The type of operation also appears to have a significant impact on the likelihood of soldiers enacting peacekeeper masculinity. British Army discourse indicates that the more force that is permitted by the mandate, or demanded by the situation on the ground, the less space there is for constructing peacekeeper masculinity. This can be seen in the differences between peacekeeping operations in the Balkans in the 1990s, and the post September 11 era operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The increasing resistance in Iraq and Afghanistan to the presence of British troops and the consequent increase in casualties arguably reduce the space for alternative masculinities to be constructed and thrive – the emphasis becomes one of force protection and combat. Yet, examples of individual soldiers negotiating a form of peacekeeper masculinity despite the dangerous environment on these more complex multi-dimensional operations indicates that it would be a mistake to neglect the role of individual agency, personality and temperament in the negotiation of military masculinities. Further empirical research could contribute to theorising about the role of these different factors.

III: What Lessons can be Drawn from Peacekeeper Masculinity? Theoretical and Methodological Contributions

This thesis has argued that, whilst it may not be a dominant model in the British Army, there is much to be learnt from peacekeeper masculinity in terms of how to achieve change in gender relations. This thesis has argued, firstly, that peacekeeper masculinity is significant – in ways which have been overlooked by other feminists – because of its challenge to the traditional gendered dichotomies underpinning militarism and war, and secondly, that when, and only when, it is constructed through non-radical Others it contributes to real and lasting change in gender relations – dismantling and unravelling hegemonic masculinity. These findings can inform strategies for achieving change in gender relations in other contexts.

Peacekeeper masculinity links masculinity to the practices of conflict resolution, thus challenging the traditional gendered dichotomies underpinning militarism and war: war/peace, protector/protected, active/passive, tough/weak and so on. The significance of

such a challenge should not be underestimated, as these are dichotomies which have persisted for centuries, perpetuating and justifying inter and intra-state violence with devastating consequences. Yet, this challenge alone can be problematic, as, at the same time as deconstructing these gendered dichotomies, peacekeeper masculinity could be said to construct alternative gendered dichotomies which are just as damaging. The risks of this are clearly demonstrated in the critique of peacekeeper masculinity offered by Orford, Razack and Whitworth and discussed in chapter eight. This critique argues that discourses which emphasise a humane, rational, civilized peacekeeper, sent to bring peace and security to areas of conflict around the world, both draw on and reinforce colonial narratives. Just as colonial narratives employed racist and feminised portrayals of the Oriental or Third World Other in order to justify the imperial enterprise, popular western narratives of peacekeeping today employ racist and feminised portrayals of the Other to justify interventions by making them seem altruistic missions whilst ignoring the legacy of colonialism and the role of neo-liberal markets – and therefore western policies – in causing and exacerbating conflict. If peacekeeper masculinity were to become the dominant model in the British Army through such constructions of subordinated Others – constructing the equally damaging gendered dichotomies of advanced/backward, civilized/barbaric, protector/protected (where this protected is the feminised civilian population in areas of conflict, as opposed to the Beautiful Soul on the home front), then, hegemonic masculinity in the British Army would certainly be challenged, but it would not be unravelled or dismantled.

If peacekeeper masculinity is constructed through non-radical Othering, however, it begins to “dismantle” (Connell 1995) or “unravel” (Hooper 2000) hegemonic masculinity. The concept of non-radical Othering recognises that all identities are relationally constituted, but maintains that these relations do not need to be hierarchical, oppositional or threatening (Hansen 2006). When peacekeeper masculinity is constructed through relations of equality, empathy or mutual respect, it not only challenges traditional gendered dichotomies underpinning militarism and war, it challenges the entire structure of hierarchical dichotomous thinking, and thus all relations of hegemony and hierarchy. Peacekeeper masculinity constructed in this way can be conceptualised as a “regendered soldier,” part of a “regendered military” (Cockburn and Hubic 2002) in which equal numbers of men and women enact fluid and shifting gender roles in the service of peace and security.

In chapter nine, drawing from the concept of regendered militaries, I argued that three interconnected strategies could be employed in order to bring about this fundamental change in gender relations in other contexts. As such, this thesis contributes to the feminist and gender studies literature on how to achieve change in gender relations. By bringing together the feminist literature on strategies for change (Peterson and True 1998; Scott 1986; 1990; Squires 1999; Zalewski 2000) with the literature which focuses on masculinities (Connell 1995; 2002a; Demetriou 2001; Hooper 2000; Niva 1998; Segal 1997), and developing the concept of regendered militaries, it is able to suggest a way beyond the inclusion, reversal and deconstruction impasse. Poststructuralist inspired feminists have argued that the role of feminism should be to highlight the artificiality of the gendered dichotomies which structure our language and thought. Such strategies of deconstruction or displacement have been seen as an advance on earlier feminist strategies of inclusion or reversal, as more radical projects of recasting rather than sustaining (albeit reversing) or rejecting (through ignoring) traditional gendered dichotomies (Squires 1999: 3). This thesis has argued that deconstruction is achieved by peacekeeper masculinity and its association of masculinity with the practices of conflict resolution, focusing our attention on how gendered dichotomies such as war/peace got to be constructed that way in the first place and challenging their naturalisation. Deconstruction has its limits, however, in terms of providing an actual political strategy. Chapter four suggested that many poststructuralist feminists who advocate the strategy of deconstruction are sceptical about normative political projects with their utopian or emancipatory visions. They argue that to focus on creating uncertainty and challenging accepted meanings is not only all we can do, but that it in itself *is* political. The situation of those in areas of poverty and conflict suggests that this is not good enough – we need more than a strategy of deconstruction and displacement if we are to tackle the problems of inequality, injustice and insecurity. Chapters eight and nine thus focused on the way in which peacekeeper masculinity could be said to represent or embody a strategy of reconstruction or reconceptualisation as well as deconstruction or displacement. The lesson of regendered militaries is that deconstruction is not such a departure from the strategies of inclusion and reversal after all. One of the ways of destabilising the link between masculinity and soldiering in order to create fluid and shifting gender roles in regendered militaries is through the increase in the number of women soldiers. Also, one of the ways of ensuring that conflict resolution and positive peace and security are prioritised by regendered militaries is through valuing practices traditionally positioned as feminine, such as negotiation, caring and sensitivity. A strategy of reconstruction, in other words, may need modified versions of the strategies of inclusion and reversal as well as deconstruction. The

key here is that they must further the aim of increased fluidity in gender, rather than reinforce or simply ignore gendered dichotomies. Yet, this combination of deconstruction and modified inclusion and reversal is not enough. The lesson of this thesis is that hierarchical gendered dichotomies must be replaced by relations of equality – the relational aspect of gender is crucial. The three strategies thus proposed are, firstly, traditional gendered dichotomies must be deconstructed; secondly, women need to infiltrate all-male spaces; and thirdly, relations of equality and mutual respect – constructed through non-radical Othering – must be encouraged.

This thesis also contributes to the Critical Security Studies literature in two ways. It adds a focus on gender to those gender-blind scholars who argue that PSOs do have a role to play in creating peace and security, recognising the need for a new kind of soldier, but who neglect the importance of challenging hegemonic forms of military masculinity which have been implicated in many of the problems of PSOs (Bellamy 2003; Bellamy and Williams 2004; Elliot and Cheeseman 2005b; Johansen 2006; Woodhouse and Ramsbotham 2005). Secondly, it demonstrates that the critique of peacekeeping outlined by those feminist scholars who do pay attention to gender (Orford 1999; Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004), whilst being enormously valuable in drawing our attention to the way in which narratives of peacekeeper masculinity often involve problematic constructions of the Other, in implying that peacekeeping narratives always, inevitably do this, tends to be over-determinist and rely on monolithic accounts of masculinity. Although it is necessary to pay close attention to the way in which hegemonic masculinity may shift yet retain power through the construction of new hierarchical gendered dichotomies or new radical Others, such as when the Just Warrior becomes the Just Peacekeeper, it is equally important to remain alert to the instances – albeit in this context few and far between – in which something different appears to be happening.

Methodologically, this thesis also makes an original contribution in its highlighting of the compatibility between anti-militarist feminism and Critical Security Studies, its development of discourse theory, and its use of novel methods and sources. The adoption of a social constructivist approach to both feminism and security demonstrates the potentially fruitful cross-fertilisation which can occur between anti-militarist feminists and Critical Security Studies theorists, thus addressing the problem of IR's resistance to recognising the centrality of gender to issues of security, militarism, war and peace (Steans 2006 135ff; Tickner 1997; True 2001: 262-264; Youngs 2004; Zalewski 1995; 2007). Combining the approaches to

discourse or textual analysis of Hansen (2006) and Hooper (2000) demonstrated that discourse analysis can reveal a great deal about the construction of gender – both as individual identity and as a symbolic structure. The use of military doctrine, recruitment and training material and autobiographies introduced novel sources to the field of gender and IR. These innovations will hopefully inspire and encourage other researchers in the field.⁹⁷

IV: Regendered Militaries and the Importance of Utopian Thinking

Despite travelling in directions that many anti-militarist feminists will no doubt find problematic, the arguments of this thesis are fundamentally concerned with anti-militarist feminist aims: to replace war and militarism and with reconciliation and non-violence. The thesis shares the viewpoint that the long term solutions to complex political emergencies involve tackling the structures of inequality and injustice connected to colonial legacies and neo-liberal market economics. In the short-term, however, military interventions may be the best way of achieving peace and security for people in areas of conflict. If militaries have to be involved, it is better that they are regendered militaries, along the lines suggested in this thesis, than ones in which combat masculinity remains hegemonic, or in which peacekeeper masculinity is constructed through feminised and racialised Others. The question is whether regendered militaries can form part of the short term solution without simultaneously making the long term solution less likely. This fear is expressed in arguments that a reliance on militaries for PSOs means that the militarisation of societies will become more entrenched (Enloe 2000; 2007), that gender issues are less likely to be considered on operations (Mazurana 2005), and that violence and sexual exploitation are inevitable (Razack 2004; Whitworth 2004). Yet what is being proposed here is that *regendered* militaries may form part of the solution. As regendered militaries are institutions concerned with conflict resolution skills and practices, rather than combat and war, the militarisation of society becomes less of a concern. As they contain equal numbers of men and women, enacting fluid and shifting roles, gender issues would not be ignored; rather, the naturalisation of problematic definitions of masculinity and femininity is being deconstructed by the very

⁹⁷ It is important to state that I do not see these three contributions as separate contributions to distinct sub-sections of the field. As I introduced this chapter by arguing, gender is important because of the way in which it structures our language, thought, culture, and institutions. It is not a discreet subject area but a powerful ordering symbolic structure. If we can challenge inequality and injustice in gender relations, this is not just a contribution to some area of academic or personal life labelled gender, but a challenge to inequality to injustice in their broadest sense.

existence of a regendered militaries. Finally, as regendered militaries by definition involve peacekeepers constructing relations of mutual respect, equality and empathy, they can start to undo some of the damage of colonial legacies and neo-liberal market economics at the micro level. As such, they should not contradict the long term aims, but rather, hasten their realisation. Regendered militaries can thus be conceptualised less as a stop-gap, more as containing the seeds of more radical, transformatory change.

This discussion of regendered militaries takes us largely into utopian territory. The British Army is far from representing a regendered military, with peacekeeper masculinity as yet a faint and fragile model in the discourse, but utopian territory is important to explore because it suggests the strategies necessary in order to reach it. The potential represented by regendered militaries for tackling (gendered) inequality and oppression makes it all the more important that we pay close attention to developments in the British Army – and other militaries – in Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond. What direction will UK foreign and military policy take? Will there be space for peacekeeper masculinity to be negotiated and will soldiers perform it? Crucially, if so, will it be constructed through radical Others or non-radical Others? Will changes to gender identity construction in the military resonate beyond the British Army to wider UK society? To other national militaries? To what extent will gender as a symbolic structure be affected? All these questions are open, not pre-determined, and demand a centrality in the study of IR hitherto denied them.

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